

So You Want to Help People

A Mental Hygiene Primer for Group Leaders

by

RUDOLPH M. WITTENBERG

With a Foreword by

RUSSELL DICKS



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Foreword

MENTAL HYGIENISTS have long recognized the gap between the insights of modern psychology and those of group work. With the growing amount of mental illness, ranging from quite minor difficulties to major emotional breaks, we have faced serious difficulty in bringing our knowledge to bear upon these problems. There are not enough psychiatrists, psychiatric social workers, or skilled counselors to care for those who need help. It would take years, even if adequate training facilities were available, to train enough of them to deal with these steadily increasing personality problems. Further, there is doubt in the minds of some as to whether it is necessary or desirable to have all of our young people placed upon a counseling regime.

What then is the solution to this serious mental and physical health problem, for the mental and physical cannot be separated? The greatest potential untapped resource is the groups into which our young people find their way: schools, churches, scouts, Y.M.C.A.'s, Y.W.C.A.'s, 4-H Clubs, settlement houses, and just ordinary spontaneous groups everywhere. But mental hygienists have despaired of the leadership of these numerous groups, for their recognition of the emotional make-up of personality, of the understanding of why we act as we do, is almost nil. What to do? Write books, articles, give speeches. The trouble has been that the books, articles, and speeches have been done by people who knew psychology and psychotherapy but little about group work. So we have been like small dogs lost in the tall oats: jumping and jumping, but never seeing our way out.

Here is a book that *sees its way out*. Rudolph M. Wittenberg knows both psychology and group work. His book, *So You Want to Help People*, will make a major contribution toward bridging the gap between these two vital types of work. In fact this book could revolutionize the work of the church and other organizations where there are thousands of earnest helpers, many of whom do not even think of themselves as group lead-

ers, who do not need a greater understanding of the subject matter which they are teaching as much as a *greater understanding of the persons* with whom they are dealing. Pastors constantly ask, "What is the relation of the work of the church to growing personality?" "How can the group work in the church be more effective in the light of modern psychology?" Here is the answer. Dr. Wittenberg proposes that the persons who make up a group, rather than the subject or the project the group studies and participates in, shall be made the center of attention.

This proposal in no way invalidates the importance of the teaching of knowledge and skills, of giving instruction in ethical, moral, and religious truth, of enlisting young people in high causes. In fact this book shows us that many persons are incapable of losing their interests, hopes, loyalties, efforts, in anything greater than themselves because of personal problems that must be dealt with before they can be free persons. The book is filled with excellent illustrations as to how this principle applies in given situations. It reveals again and again *why we act, think, and feel as we do*. If the knowledge that is packed into this little book can be assimilated by group leaders generally, we may see a great resource for mental health that is at present largely dormant utilized for the benefit of our people and the peoples of the world.

CHICAGO, 1947

RUSSELL L. DICKS

Contents

	PAGE
FOREWORD, by Russell Dicks.....	v
INTRODUCTION: How This Book Came to Be Written.....	ix

I

THE LEADER LOOKS AT THE GROUP

CHAPTER

I. RELATIONSHIP: THE TRANSMISSION BELT.....	3
II. GOOD FOR WHOM: LEADER OR GROUP?.....	23
III. PROGRAM: ENDS OR MEANS?.....	40

II

THE GROUP AND THE INDIVIDUALS WITHIN IT

IV. DOCTOR OR POLICEMAN?.....	61
V. BOY MEETS GIRL.....	75
VI. HELP WANTED	89
VII. WE TALK TOO MUCH.....	98
VIII. WHAT PRICE RECORDING?.....	111

III

"MEETING GROUNDS" BETWEEN LEADER AND GROUP

IX. "KEEP 'EM OFF THE STREET".....	125
X. SUMMERTIME	135
XI. SUNDAY MORNING	152
XII. COMMON TO ALL GROUPS.....	161
NOTES	174

INTRODUCTION

How This Book Came to Be Written

ON MY WAY TO THE CONFERENCE, the taxi driver made a comment that had some bearing on the topic. Whether it is because people share taxis in Washington, and thus give the drivers more opinions per minute than in cities where they ride for hours with one passenger, or whether this driver was an FBI man in disguise, he certainly seemed to know the score. He said that he had heard the word "delinquency" mentioned eight hundred and seventy-five times on this day alone. And to the laughter of the passengers—all attending the conference—he said: "Up where I live, we all give a hand. You can find me out on the diamond any nice Sunday with a bunch of the boys." His remark brought sharply to mind the wide range of people interested in youngsters and their problems.

We were attending an impressive National Conference called by the Department of Justice to consider the Control and Prevention of Delinquency. Every state and local agency interested in the problem was represented; even the FBI joined in, as well as high-ranking police officials and experts in crime prevention and control. The conference wrote another blueprint for youthful education and guidance, with recommendations for action in every local community.

People are reading the statistics of juvenile delinquency and shaking their heads in anxious fear. They are saying what our grandfathers told us—that an ounce of prevention is better than a pound of cure. They are watching vandalism and gang fights in city streets and asking: What is going to happen?

GROUP LEADERS: BUILDERS OF YOUTH

Many persons are more practical than the worriers. Wanting to do something constructive, they, like the hackie in Washington, are right in there pitching and doing their share. Some of

them give up their Sunday afternoons to take groups of boys to the ball-diamond, and to the soda fountain after the game. They round up the youngsters near their farm and spend a day fishing. They drive over to the nearest Y.M.C.A. and lead a club, or go to the nearest neighborhood house and put on a play with young people.

They don't get medals for it—not even the kind of recognition we received during the war when we volunteered our services as air-raid wardens and emergency policemen. They are doing it for the satisfaction they get from knowing that they are helping a little to raise a new generation of good citizens. Because you belong to this crowd of volunteer leaders of youth, this book is for you.

A good friend of mine, an electrical engineer whose children are now married, spends two evenings a week in a settlement house in one of the toughest neighborhoods of his city. His tinker shop is the mecca of all the neglected, potentially delinquent boys of the community. They just go in there and tinker around. Tom brings in scrap-metal and screws and discarded radio sets and defunct dynamos. There isn't a youngster who doesn't love to help fix them up and get them working. During those three hours they are as well behaved as anyone could wish. And, incidentally, they tell Tom more than they tell their parents and their teachers.

Tom, having learned some things in bringing up his own children, knows better than most persons that he doesn't have the answer to all the questions they ask. So he goes upstairs and asks advice from some of the "regulars"—men and women who have made a life-work of trying to help young people. Some of them, young enough to be Tom's children, hesitate about advising him. If you knew him, you would realize how they feel. He is big and impressive with his white hair and deep voice. He is wealthy, with connections all over town. Everyone knows him. But he is a wise man and he tells the trained workers that he expects them to help him. "You people have studied for that," he says, "and I want you to help me do a better job in my tinker-shop."

The "full-time" people and Tom get together over a cup of coffee and talk about the youngsters. Later some other folks

from the neighborhood join them and they begin to meet regularly. Sometimes they invite in a "specialist" to hear what they have to say. Somehow I got in with that crowd and learned from them and later from other folks, and over the years collected a good deal of material. When one has a lot of stuff, somebody is bound to come along and say: Why don't you write a book about it? And this is it.

The idea was suggested by people like Tom and other leaders. There were businessmen and lawyers, doctors and ministers, workmen and housewives—all kinds of folks of different colors and religions. They were part of the great army of people who work with youngsters in this country, especially youngsters between eight and eighteen years of age.

Whether we know it or not, most of us do more than coach a team or show boys how to raise a calf for the county fair. We are really helping young people to grow up. The boys in Tom's tinker-shop behave better partly because nobody else ever showed them how to fix a radio, partly because they like and respect Tom. There is something intangible between a leader and a group that goes much deeper than the knowledge and skill he brings. Years after youngsters have forgotten where they learned to fix a radio, or to make a belt, or to play in an orchestra, or to preside in a meeting, they will remember Tom—and that will make a difference in how they think and feel and act.

THE IMPORTANCE OF UNDERSTANDING

Young people get something from their group leaders that sounds so simple and so commonplace that some of us keep forgetting how big it is and how fundamental—*understanding*. Time and again, when reading case histories of people who have gone wrong, one is struck by the fact that the man's brother or sister in the same family, with the same background and the same handicaps, turned out all right. If one does a little digging, he will usually find that the man who turned out well had the good fortune to find someone who understood him when he needed it most. This somebody has often been a man or woman who neither wanted nor got much credit for what

he did, although actually it was as important as if it had been done by the most prominent person in the city. Professional leaders of youth are necessary in every community but they can do only part of the job. We need the good will and the common sense of *volunteers*, together with the knowledge that *specialists* have acquired.

One thing we can get from the specialists is their way of understanding people. Not that we don't all have a measure of understanding. But many of us understand folks with our fingertips, with a kind of sixth sense. Half of the time we cannot tell why we like someone, why we are firm with that boy, or very easy with this one. Much of the time we do the same thing an expert would do, without quite knowing why; sometimes we make mistakes.

Tom used to say that it would be fine if we could tell what is wrong with a person's behavior the way we can with his health. Physical hygiene tells us how to keep well, physically. Mental hygiene is something like it, although it is not nearly as accurate and developed. In physical hygiene, we use certain concepts and knowledge as a matter of course in our everyday lives: We brush our teeth; we wash our hands; we watch what we eat; we avoid people with colds. In mental hygiene, too, we use certain concepts and knowledge all the time: We say he is "that way" because he had an unhappy childhood; we say she is acting that way because she has something on her mind; we say Bill is bringing home poor marks because he is pre-occupied; we say Mary isn't eating because her fiancé hasn't written for two weeks; we say John's illness is caused by worry, not by disease germs. Thus we make everyday use of the mental hygiene law that the physical, mental, emotional, and social sides of the individual are part of the whole personality. These very simple things emphasize an important point that we usually recognize but sometimes forget: There is always a reason for a person's behavior.

MORE KNOWLEDGE OF MENTAL HYGIENE

Let us take one typical mental hygiene concept and put it more formally; it goes something like this: Personality is the result of an evolutionary process, passing through various stages

of development. It is motivated by certain strong basic instincts, both conscious and unconscious.

There we have a term that has become quite fashionable. We hear about unconscious motivations over the radio; we read about them in stories and novels; recently Hollywood has made much use of the idea of unconscious motives.

A generation ago the great Austrian psychiatrist, Sigmund Freud, explored fully the role of the unconscious as part of everyday behavior. Ever since his time, workers in the field of human relations have used it to gain better understanding. People have likened the unconscious to that part of an iceberg which is submerged. The part which is visible is the conscious mind. Sometimes when we do not seem to be able to see any reason for behavior, it helps to remember that the submerged part of the personality, the unconscious, affects all of one's thoughts, feelings, and actions. Many of the deeper causes of behavior are unconscious and therefore not easily made visible. Mental hygiene is concerned with the effect of these hidden depths upon mental health.

All of this is familiar to people who work with individuals. For some reason it has not been as extensively applied to the behavior of persons in groups. Group leaders need more knowledge of behavior—more knowledge of mental hygiene—more than most people, because they do not work with one individual, but always with several. All leaders agree that the real secret of success is in their awareness of the interactions that take place among the members of their groups. The way a person behaves when one speaks to him alone may be quite different from the way he behaves when surrounded by his friends.

This interaction among the persons of a group, also known as the *group process*, is really our special business. We take part in it somehow, whether we want to or not. Mental hygiene can enable us to participate more deliberately, more knowingly in the group process. It can enable us to make more certain that group experience meets the needs of the individual members and at the same time keeps the whole group moving toward its goal. Toward this end we have attempted to apply mental hygiene concepts to our work with young people between eight and eighteen years of age in a number of different situations.

TOO SCIENTIFIC?

Is there a risk of doing more harm than good in thus giving a "smattering" of scientific knowledge to volunteer workers? Many good leaders have fears about becoming "too scientific." We all feel that way at times. We become selfconscious when we want to be natural and at ease with our groups. Some of us have said: "If I approach my group with cold objectivity and become too analytical, I can't be spontaneous. I am too formal."

There is no denying that at times this does happen, particularly when we first begin to watch carefully what we are doing. But eventually, when increased understanding and knowledge become second nature, we can be ourselves again. We know very well from other fields that we can enjoy a thing more if we understand it better. Take the case of the poet, Keats. He "felt that his enjoyment of the rainbow was inherently dependent on a sense of mystery, and he imagined that the light of knowledge would dispel this, thus removing the necessary condition for his enjoyment. There are two answers to this attitude. In the first place, no scientific man could feel that any gain in knowledge weakens his sense of wonder at the universe. On the contrary: to know more can only teach one how little is known and how much is, perhaps, knowable. Humility at the unknown increases if the illusions born of ignorance are dispelled." (1)* Knowledge is always a good thing, the more the better. We need not be afraid to learn and apply all the mental hygiene we can.

The book divides itself into three parts. In the first, the spotlight is on the leader; in the second, on the group; in the third, on places in which leaders and groups meet.

Part I begins with the thought that *relationship* is the basis for working with people. It attempts to specify some of the factors that decide the kind of relationships, and emphasizes the point that the leader is a human being with definite needs of his own, a simple fact that is not always sufficiently recognized. What is good for the leader is not necessarily good for the group. Since we cannot always be aware of our motivation, we often unconsciously impose programs on our groups. We

* All quoted sources are listed at the end of the book.

shall look at the fact that program activity is often considered the purpose rather than the tool with which to help people.

Part II begins with one of the "headaches" in the execution of the program—discipline. The chapter called "Doctor or Policeman" discusses this problem. In the chapter on "Boy Meets Girl" the topic is narrowed down to one of the important concerns of teen-age youth.

Occasionally we come to a point where we throw up our hands and say: I can't do anything with that boy. One difficulty usually is that we do not know enough about specialized agencies that will bring to us the help of case workers or psychiatrists. When we choose to go into more individualized work ourselves, we use the interview method and sometimes write down such discussions. The chapters called "We Talk Too Much" and "What Price Recording?" are meant to cover these matters.

Part III deals with some of the typical settings in which leaders operate, such as Settlement Houses, Camps, Sunday Schools.

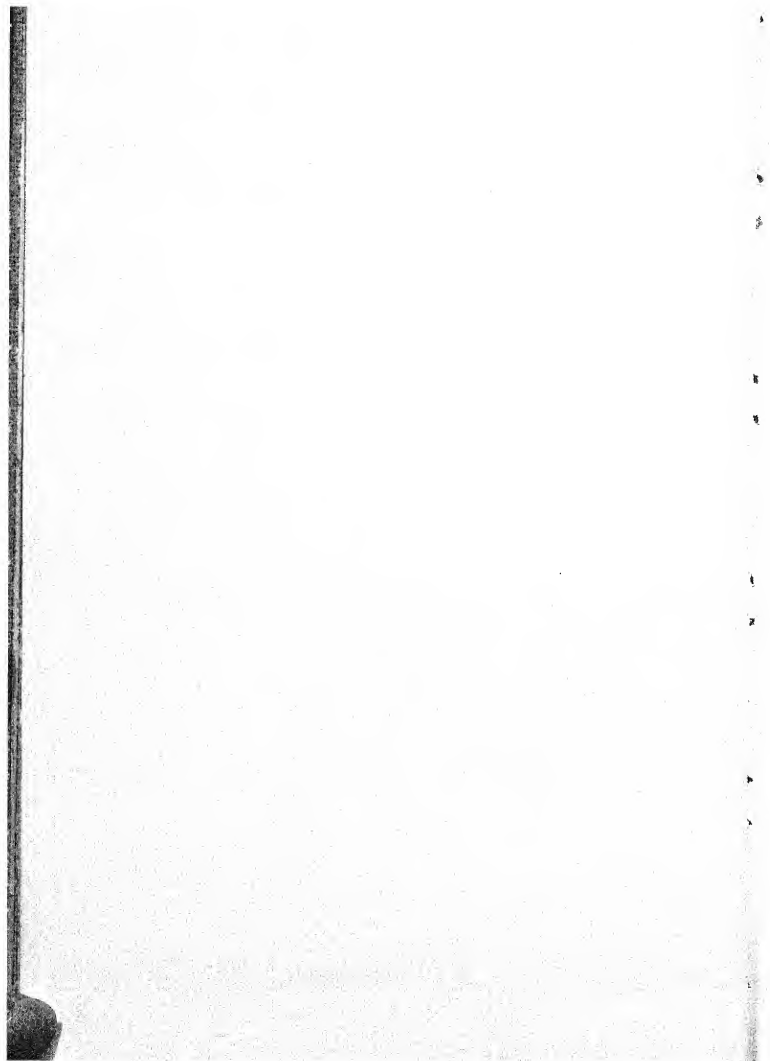
It is customary to acknowledge, in the beginning of a book, the help given an author. I find it very difficult to single out individuals because there are more than I could possibly name. There are specialists, teachers of group work, workers in various group-work agencies, psychiatrists, editors, friends. There is the taxi driver in Washington and Tom and all the leaders of groups and clubs with whom I have worked in seminars and workshops. They are the leaders of our young people—these intelligent, warm, human beings, these many, simple, down-to-earth men and women in boys' and girls' clubs, Y.M.C.A.'s, Y.W.C.A.'s, scout troops, 4-H clubs, settlement houses, camps and Sunday Schools—all over the country. To them this book is dedicated.

NEW YORK, 1947

RUDOLPH M. WITTENBERG

I

The Leader Looks at the Group



CHAPTER I

Relationship: the Transmission Belt

EVERYONE OF US has his specialties. I know how to coach a play; you are an expert in arts and crafts; others know how to can tomatoes or coach a team. Each one has some specialty or skill. These skills are handy and necessary, but what really counts is *personality*.

THE IMPORTANCE OF PERSONALITY

Personality is more important than skill. This is one reason why what we say is less important than how we say it. Not all of us rate personality as the key factor. If one works with machines, skill will, of course, be the highest requirement, but if one works with people, and particularly young people, personality is more important. We do not mean that skill is not necessary. It is a tool with which one works; skill in working with young people is the means with which one achieves his ends—to help others to help themselves. But personality is the hand that holds the tool.

Everyone, of course, ought to know how to go about his business. What is it that we, as leaders of groups, need to know? Part of it is skill, a specialization; part of it is a sound knowledge of human behavior and of the young people with whom we work; part of it is knowledge about ourselves. The phase with which we are concerned in this chapter is the bridge between leader and group—*relationships*. This often is an intangible thing, and yet it is the secret of success or failure with groups. If we are able to establish sound relationships, our skill can be applied to good advantage. If there is a really sound relationship, the group may even accept a leader who does not have special skills. Without a good relationship between leader and group, skill is of little use.

FACTORS THAT INFLUENCE RELATIONSHIPS

It is not possible to set up fixed rules which govern this relationship "ability." There are, however, a number of factors which definitely influence relationships, factors that can be stated in terms of mental hygiene concepts. (2)

1. THE INDIVIDUAL RELIVES HIS PRIMARY FAMILY-GROUP
EXPERIENCES IN ANY OTHER GROUP TO WHICH HE BELONGS

Bill, the youngest of five children, coddled by parents, brothers, and sisters, learned early that he was not strong enough physically to express his own wishes and therefore learned to cry or stamp his feet when he was in distress. His mother would then "go after" the older ones, tell them to leave Billy alone, and sometimes punish them. Crying became a very satisfying means of expression for him. Since we repeat satisfying experiences and do not give up one satisfaction until we have found an adequate substitute, Bill cried in order to get what he wanted and gave it up only if promised candy. His relationship to adults was determined partly by his position as the youngest of five. There were, of course, a great number of other factors—among them the circumstance that he was small and frail, attractive and bright. His mother tried to get him to play with children of his own age but Bill got more satisfaction from the protective relationship which he had enjoyed with his older brothers and sisters. Therefore he avoided boys of his own age as long as he could.

When he entered his first group outside the family—public school—he found himself in a different situation. He was immediately in sharp competition with a few other younger and smaller children and fought continuously with them. At home, he had been the only "youngest" in his family group; now he had to share the attention and protection of the teacher with quite a few others. Instinctively he attached himself to the bigger children, and with his bright manners and neat work became the apple of the teacher's eye. As the pupils advanced and the age range widened, a group of the older and stronger children, plus Bill, who was the youngest, became established in a definite position of leadership in the school.

The group later formed a club in a recreation center where

Bill was the youngest member. He thus succeeded in re-establishing for himself the position he had held in the family group. Once in this position, he could continue comfortably with his pattern of behavior. Instead of crying, he would get attention by wise-cracking or clowning, sometimes using the group leader for protection against the bossiest members of the group. The leader, not aware of Bill's pattern, repeated his mother's protective role, so that he never hit his stride on his own merits, but always as a little boy compared to older boys in the group.

The group leader's relationship to Bill, which was in many ways similar to the one his mother had with him, did not enable him to grow up to the point where he could feel comfortable with people of his own level. As he grew older he found it more difficult, of course, to get attention on the basis of his age. Adults no longer protected him, for he himself was becoming one of them. Yet in his behavior he expressed the desire for a continuation of his childhood pattern. He is today a young man with a chip on his shoulder who feels that the world owes him a living. People call him spoiled and self-indulgent.

If this leader, and other leaders, had been aware of the fact that he was reliving his family experiences in his group life, they could have used their relationship with him more wisely. It is necessary to stress the point that we do not mean "parallel-ing" a relationship when we say "reliving." The basic *motives* are the same, but the *forms* in which the pattern reappears may be quite different. This complicates the job of the leader who is not always aware of the childhood pattern. If Bill could have been helped to find security with children of his own age, an important contribution would have been made to all his later life.

2. RELATIONSHIPS ARE FURTHER AFFECTED BY KNOWLEDGE OF THE WAYS IN WHICH AGGRESSION IS EXPRESSED

Take the case of youngsters, particularly in adolescence, who "fool around" or tease, perhaps even disagree violently, shout, and break up furniture. Aggression is part of normal behavior and to a certain extent fostered in our culture. We expect a salesman to be aggressive; we expect boys to be able to stand up for themselves and fight back. Our system of free enterprise fosters competition and, with it, aggression.

Aggression is expressed in different forms, all the way from teasing to killing. It is an attack, and frequently follows a real or imagined need for defense. We know that if youngsters in our groups are strongly aggressive, they are expressing some anxiety, some insecurity. This is most obvious when they are put "on the spot" for something they have done. If, in a discussion, one of the parties becomes intensely aggressive, talking and shouting in a loud voice, we may know that his behavior expresses some of his fears or insecurities.

The behavior of the "tough guy" can be understood in that light. The swaggering, boisterous, bullying youngster whom people call arrogant or fresh, is in reality a human being who reveals his feelings of insecurity about himself and the world in which he lives by his aggressive actions. This behavior might have become a personality pattern no longer related to the original causes of his insecurity, whatever they were.

Behavior patterns are formed like any other habits. If one has driven a car for many years, his right foot will go down on the brake at the sight of a red light or an approaching obstruction even when sitting in the back of a friend's car. He will laughingly explain that he is so used to driving that he puts on the brakes without even knowing it. And, indeed, he may find it difficult not to do it.

If a leader has grown up in a tough neighborhood with little personal, financial, and emotional security, where he had to be aggressive in order to get what he wanted, he is likely to be aggressive long after he has left the environment that originally determined his behavior. Unless he understands himself very well indeed, he may, without realizing what he is doing, take it out on his group.

Knowledge of the ways in which aggression is expressed will affect the leader's relationship to persons in his group. It is well to remember again that aggression is part of the normal growth process, that it takes different forms at different age levels, and needs to be understood in order to be accepted.

If, for example, youngsters become very aggressive toward their leader, he can ruin his relationship with them if he is not aware of what they are really expressing when they shout. People speak in many other ways than through words. If the leader has many anxieties and emotional insecurities of his own

the aggressions of youngsters in his group will disturb him and he may react with counter aggressions. Thus the leader's awareness of his own needs is of great importance in understanding and handling the aggressions of group members.

It is usually desirable to look upon a youngster's aggressive behavior as compensation for a weakness. It is a sort of crutch that holds him up, and one would not take a crutch away from a person unless he no longer needs it, not even the crutch of irritating behavior. Therefore, the wise leader will not say to the tough guy: "You aren't really tough, you are a softie." Such a statement can only produce more defenses and aggression, and will injure relationships. It is better to accept such behavior and understand it for what it really is. The degree to which the youngster can give up his tough manners in dealing with the leader is the measure of the leader's skill in using the group process constructively in order to give him more security.

3. RELATIONSHIP IS FURTHER AFFECTED BY THE KNOWLEDGE
THAT YOUNG PEOPLE NEED TO TEST THE LEADER
WHO IS TO BE WITH THEM

Since the establishing of relationships between leader and group begins very early, it is important to try to be aware of the meaning of the members' behavior from the first meeting. To get a better idea of how young people feel when they meet one of us, suppose we try turning the tables, observing our own emotions when first meeting *them*. A group of leaders, asked to express their feelings about the experience of first meeting with their group, brought out a wide range of reactions. Some said they felt as if they had come to a strange tribe that spoke a different language. One leader admitted that he had been badly scared. One was deeply concerned lest the youngsters would not like him. Another recalled her first teaching experience. When she faced her class she seemed to have forgotten everything she had ever learned. "It was like being out on the ocean all by yourself."

These feelings are perfectly normal. They are based on the fact that one finds himself suddenly at the center of attention, and often of aggression, of a group. Such a situation often brings to one's mind feelings he thought he had forgotten—for instance, the fact that he himself was once quite aggressive and

perhaps felt guilty about it. There are many things that we try to forget in order to be comfortable. The leader's knowledge of the simple fact that facing a new group of young people may stir up some of those forgotten feelings and even create fear in him, will greatly help him to take his own anxiety more calmly. He can say to himself, "This is exactly what I expected would happen to me." The majority of inexperienced leaders are so overwhelmed by their own feelings that they have difficulty in remembering some of the names of persons in their group. Depending on his own background, the leader's reaction varies and his behavior takes different forms. If he is scared, as many leaders are, he may try to appear firm or tough. If one asks him why, he will probably rationalize and use the theory that it is better to hold the reins tight in the beginning and loosen them gradually later on. In reality it is often his own feeling of insecurity in the beginning that causes him to be aggressive, and he will gradually give up some of his defenses as he feels accepted by the group.

If these are some of your feelings as an adult leader, try to picture the even more overwhelming feelings of youngsters, particularly adolescents. It is true that they are in a group, while you are alone. They do derive a great deal of strength and confidence from being in a group, but they are also individuals whose feelings, just as your own, come into play. Not being sure about you, they try to find out. If you could translate their behavior into words, they would be: "What sort of a person are you, anyway?" We don't actually ask questions like this unless we are very young and still feel free to say most anything. In adolescence we have learned to hide some of our feelings. The knowing leader will try to understand the fine and secret language of behavior—a language that the young person himself does not know that he is using.

The way in which young people will test us in the beginning depends to a certain degree on their previous experiences with adults. To the adolescents we are another link in the long chain of control that gradually envelops them. How would you feel, were you in their shoes? Ever since infancy adults have restrained their purely impulsive reactions. At first they were told to stop their play and come to supper. Their lollipops were taken away before dinner. Older persons called

them from their baseball game to do homework. They have told them what was right and what was wrong, which was often quite different from the way they felt. Adults have made them sit straight at school desks and fold their hands, when outside the sun was shining. Then one day another of these adults enters their life in the form of a group leader. They want to know how different he is from other grownups they have known. They want to find out how much he will let them get away with, how much he understands them, how much they can trust him.

By now they have learned that grown-ups are tricky. They know that there were quite a few whom they could not trust although they wanted to. What will the new teacher be like, the new group leader? These are some of the feelings that young people have as they meet the new leader.

In the first few sessions, this fascinating game is played: The members will try different things with us. First they will look us over—face, clothes, the way we walk, the way we talk. Following these first impressions they will begin to ask for a few things—perhaps to be taken on an overnight hike. They may know that there is a rule against it, but they want to find out whether we know it, too. With this question, they are saying: How wise are you, Stranger?

They may lounge around the room, putting their feet on the table, using their worst language. They are saying: See, we are tough. What are you going to do about it? Relationships with the group are being formed. One leader may say nothing to the challenging behavior and accept it for what it is—a test. Another may make a speech in which he tells of his standards, which are not theirs. By doing so he immediately sets up conflict between two sets of standards and thus begins a relationship of mistrust. What the leader does is likely to be an expression of his own inner feelings, so here again, insight into his own needs will help him to understand their reactions and his own.

If the members' recent experiences with other adults have been unpleasant, they may make it pretty difficult for us. That has nothing to do with us or our own personalities, but is caused by factors over which we had no previous control. Recent unpleasant experiences with leaders or teachers have led

them to become more defensive and to hide their real feelings even more deeply, because they have been hurt. They may be sulky and perfectly passive. As we enter the room, they may barely look at us, and our first greeting to them will be like an echo in an empty hall. They may just sit there and say nothing. Some may stare at us with lowered heads; others may scowl; some may snicker.

If a leader takes this behavior to mean that he is not accepted, he has fallen into the trap and will find it very difficult to establish a sound relationship. He may find it helpful to try stating their feelings for them. One might say in this situation: You are not very happy about another leader coming in here. You don't know what to expect and perhaps some other leader has let you down. I don't blame you. I would feel the same way in your place.

While the leader is speaking, he is observing their behavior—their eyes, their faces, their hands. There will be some reaction to what he says. If he understands the language of behavior, he will get his cue for what to say next. It will be necessary, no matter what he says, to help them to express themselves and release some of their feelings about leaders. The leader's behavior and knowledge of this kind of testing will determine his relationship to the group to a large degree.

4. RELATIONSHIPS ARE FURTHER AFFECTED BY THE KNOWLEDGE THAT PEOPLE FORM "PATTERNS" OF REACTION

Every individual in our group has had experiences with people in authority. The father of one of the boys may have slapped him every time he was "fresh." The mother of another may have refused to speak to him every time he did something forbidden. If this treatment by adults has gone on for a period of time, the youngsters will acquire certain patterns of expectation. The boy whose father slaps him when he is aggressive will associate aggression with punishment. Whether the father is around or not, he will be so used to it that it has become automatic with him.

Without knowing the individuals in any given group, we are safe in assuming that many of them expect their aggressive behavior to be followed by punishment. Because some leaders

know this, they assume that if punishment is not given they will be considered weak.

If a hungry child who had never had good food came to your house, would you feed him on watery soup and dry bread? No one would do that. All of us know that this child ought *not* to continue to eat what he is used to. What the child needs is more wholesome nourishment. The emotional need for love and understanding in a youngster is as real as the need for wholesome food in a child who has never had it. In neither case should we continue the unhealthy food—the emotional or the physical—which he has always known.

The temptation to satisfy the child's expectation of punishment is greater because he will actually be surprised and even disappointed if the leader does not act as his father did. Even though the father had created an unhealthy expectation, it meant some sort of security for the child. Although he may expect the same treatment from his leader, for the leader to go on hitting him because his father did would be like giving whiskey to an alcoholic whom one is trying to help. It is very important to keep clearly in mind that this is essentially a deprived person. Deprivations apply not only to physical but to emotional needs as well. We hear a great deal about lack of housing or recreation, we hear less about lack of love and understanding.

If a boy is used to being punished by his father when he smokes, perhaps he will consider the leader soft if he does not punish him, too. He may go to his pals and say that "our new teacher is a cinch, he doesn't hit you or nothing." It does not have to be hitting; it can be disapproval of any kind. Does this kind of reaction from a boy upset some of us? Do we feel better about it if a certain amount of restraint and fear makes the group members "respect" us?

The children's reaction to the adult as being soft might well be the beginning of a new and more mature experience with adults than they have had before. They will be getting a "better balanced meal." But since new food and new experiences are sometimes bewildering we cannot serve too much at one time. If one gives the starved child a great deal of rich food, we know the result. If one gives an emotionally starved

child a great deal of love and understanding all at once, one gets a similar result. But to avoid this kind of "indigestion", one need not return to a relationship of no love at all.

Relationships are affected by the knowledge that persons who have had certain experiences only gradually get ready for different ones.

5. RELATIONSHIPS ARE FURTHER AFFECTED BY KNOWLEDGE OF THE FACT THAT ALL BEHAVIOR IS "PURPOSEFUL"

Behavior expresses underlying feelings. Behavior changes as feelings change. This fact is too often forgotten by group leaders. People act as if they could change or modify behavior the way one can change the position of a marionette on a puppet stage. They say: "Don't bite your nails. Sit straight. Be nice to your mother. Go to sleep. Why do you always forget your pencil? Be quiet, You have no reason for acting that way. Behave yourself. You must have confidence in me. Don't lie!" It doesn't work!

There is a purpose back of every action—inner feeling seeking expression. The action may seem to be the very worst way in the world to satisfy the feelings, but that is what the action is for just the same. The reasons are not always visible, since they very often lie within the unconscious. There is "purpose" in nail-biting, but it is not to make the nails shorter. We would not dream of saying: "Why are you having a temperature?" or "Stop bleeding." But we do feel free to say "Stop crying." Why does it seem ridiculous to say "Stop bleeding," and perfectly all right to say "Stop crying"? Why is it so easy to see the purpose in a boy's going to the soda-fountain and so difficult to see his purpose in nail-biting? "Because," one may say, "you cannot stop the blood from running but you can stop the tears; there is some sense in eating ice-cream but none in chewing nails."

We recognize physical pain much easier than emotional pain; we recognize physical hunger more than emotional hunger. One is as real as the other. Crying is a form of behavior. It has a reason and a purpose. One cannot hope to get at the reason by stopping the crying. Nevertheless, one says, if you tell a youngster to stop crying, he will stop. But just what has been accomplished by stopping it? Have you now any bet-

ter understanding? Do you know more than before what was causing it? Did forceful stopping cure the cause?

If we ignore the fact that behavior is purposive and unconsciously controlled, we may train young people to repress their real feelings, to conform to our standards, and to conform later to any kind of life that is based on regimentation, obedience, and repression of real feelings.

Many group leaders, on first realizing that there are reasons for everything, conclude that they must first find out "the facts" before acting. They say: I never do anything rash, I always get my facts first.

How do they go about doing that?

They go to the group member and say: Why do you come late; Why do you always forget your notebook; Why do you fight? Why are you crying? Leaders who ask these questions are assuming that people always know the reasons for their behavior. Since this is not true, the leaders are often frustrated by defensive answers, by "lying," or by "stubbornness." Although leaders who ask the "why" questions consider themselves above those who always say "don't," the difference is not as great as they like to think.

There is not much difference between "Don't bite your nails," and "Why do you bite your nails?" Actually the child does not know why and will sometimes tell us so. The reasons for it lie within the individual. All we can say here is that nail-biting represents some kind of inner tension.

About all one can do in a group situation is to ask oneself: What does this mean, why is this child so tense, so restless? If one is a knowing observer, he will probably find other symptoms of tension besides nail-biting. The various symptoms together may tell him something about the person. Often he will need help from experts.

6. RELATIONSHIP IS FURTHER AFFECTED BY KNOWLEDGE OF OUR OWN LIMITATIONS

When Mr. Smith offered his services as a volunteer leader, most of the people in the community were highly pleased, because he was a respected civil-service employee who had for many years shown his interest in local affairs. Everybody had

known how well he could play with boys and how much they liked him.

When he met his group—boys between ten and twelve years of age—he was a little surprised to find a complete lack of order. He met them one by one as they came into the building and walked with them up to the room which they were to use that night. They did not stay in the room very long, but wandered in and out, banged on the piano, hung out of the window and shouted names at the people on the street, or engaged in fights in one corner while Mr. Smith talked to a few in another.

To Mr. Smith, an extremely well-organized person, this kind of behavior seemed almost like anarchy. He felt helpless and unhappy. Because of his inability to accept this wild behavior, a limitation of which he was not aware, he found it very difficult to establish working relationships with the group.

Being a very ambitious and driving person he could not give up but forced himself to go through with the experience. After many weeks, during which he lost several members, he succeeded in establishing order in the club. He continued to rule with an iron hand but never developed any natural leadership among the members. The only reason that the boys did not leave him was the rule that they could use the swimming pool only after a club meeting with their leader. Mr. Smith never knew of this rule and was under the impression that his methods had succeeded in setting a new tone for the club, acceptable to the members.

He helped the boys elect their officers, saw to it that they collected dues, kept minutes, and talked at the meetings only after being recognized by the chairman. At the end of each meeting he would ask the boys to talk about anything they wanted "in orderly fashion" but nobody ever had anything to say. He never really "got through" to the boys. ✓

This is a fairly typical illustration of a leader who fails to establish relationships because he is not aware of his own limitations. One wonders how many children would go to school if it were not for the public education laws. Some might go because of the relationships the teacher established, but there would not be many. The reason for this would not be that children are lazy and prefer to play (because children are curious and like to learn) but because the school system relies

on compulsory education laws rather than on sound teacher-pupil relationships.

7. RELATIONSHIPS ARE FURTHER AFFECTED BY THE LEADER'S KNOWLEDGE OF WHEN TO BE ACTIVE OR PASSIVE, DEPENDING ON THE GROUP'S NEEDS

The group's needs are not always the same as the leader's needs, as we shall point out more fully in the next chapter. There may be situations in which the leader feels like stepping in and doing something while the group really needs to work out a problem alone. At other times the leader may feel like sitting back and watching when the group really wants him to step in with his adult experience and authority. The degree to which the leader is able to take his cue for activity or passivity from the group's behavior determines his relationship with it to a considerable extent.

During the meeting of a social club of fifteen-year-old girls, one of the members suggested that they hire a band. The suggestion was greeted with enthusiasm until the leader spoke. She said that she did not want to be a wet blanket but ought to point out that the group's treasury contained only twelve dollars, which was not nearly enough to hire a band. Considerable discussion followed. The club split on the question; one group agreed with the leader while the other insisted that it could be done if only the leader would stop throwing a monkey-wrench into their plans.

There is no question but that the objection of the leader was sound. Twelve dollars was not enough to hire a band for a dance. The problem is: What are the leader's goals with this group? Apparently she was concerned only with the practical question of the dance. Another leader might have been interested in helping the girls find out how much a band costs, how to raise the money for it, thus learning to do things together for their own enjoyment. Furthermore, the group had not asked the adult for advice; the leader gave her advice unsolicited and was more concerned with being practical than with helping the girls have an experience of learning. She, therefore, was active, thus forcing the group to be passive and to do nothing about either the band or the dance. It would have been possible to turn this discussion into very constructive

channels if the leader had been more clear about her own objectives, as well as the group's needs and limitations.

We do not wish to give the impression that it is always better for youngsters to find out things for themselves. Sometimes it is, other times it is not, and it is the leader's job to know what the group needs at any time.

One could imagine another leader sitting back and observing, using her skill perhaps to get one of the shy members of the club to express herself, or to ask one of the more aggressive ones to listen to what the majority has to say—without cutting in with any definite stand of her own. The discussion could have taken any number of courses, one of them being a decision to go to a given band and try to make arrangements. Even if this were unsuccessful, the members themselves would have learned some of the problems faced by a band and the reasons for the prices they charge. Or the discussion might have led the club into a money-raising project which, if undertaken by the whole group, would have had the value that any common experience has for the good of the majority. There are many other courses. In this particular case, the group left the meeting feeling frustrated because of the leader's activity.

Sometimes the leader's passivity can be equally inappropriate. A group of boys voted during a club meeting to exclude an absent member because of nonpayment of dues in the past. The leader sat back and let the group make this decision, feeling that the boys had a right to conduct their own affairs. By coincidence, he met the excluded thirteen-year-old boy a few days afterward. In talking with him he learned that he was brought up by his grandmother, a very anxious, rigid old lady who did not permit him to leave the house very often and gave him no pocket money. The boy spent most of his spare time alone with his grandmother, being almost completely cut off from contacts with boys of his own age, except at school where there was little opportunity for social intercourse. The leader realized that the boy needed the club desperately and that the exclusion had done a great deal of harm to him.

This was a situation in which the leader should have been active. He could have done so without damage to the democratic process which he was trying to develop. Another leader had handled a similar situation more successfully. She had

used her influence to gain time for the member in question, persuading the club to hold their vote until the following meeting. She explained that neither she nor the others knew enough about the member in question to understand her irregular attendance. Once the group recognized that understanding comes before acting, they willingly changed their plan. The leader used the time gained to visit the member's home and tell the family about herself and the club. The foreign-born parents were afraid that harm might come to their daughter by regular attendance in a co-ed club. The few times that the girl had gone to meetings, she had done so without her mother's knowledge. After the parents had met the leader and understood that their daughter was safe, they gave permission for her to attend regularly. The leader was able to go back and assure the group that it was not necessary to exclude the member, thus being of considerable help to the group, as well as a particular individual, by her activity.

These illustrations of instances in which leaders needed to be active or passive, depending on circumstances, help to clarify the point that the leader's knowledge of when to be active or passive determines the value of her relationship with her group.

8. RELATIONSHIP IS FURTHER AFFECTED BY THE FACT
THAT A GROUP MIGHT NOT BE READY TO MAKE USE
OF THE SKILLS THE LEADER HAS TO OFFER

As we go into a group situation, we take with us certain ideas of what young people usually like. Quite naturally, in planning a program, we think of activities that we know well and hope the club will like. If we have special skills, or excel in some craft, we try to "sell" these activities to our group.

If a leader can be relaxed enough to permit the group to use him in the way most meaningful to them, he may find himself giving real help in a very different way from what he had originally intended.

It is sometimes quite surprising what youngsters want from a leader. A young man with the French name, DuBois, was assigned to lead a group of older Negro boys, many of whose ancestors had lived in Louisiana. The leader had a special interest in music and, although he was a young lawyer, had

spent many years studying folk music, sang very well, played several instruments, and had a large collection of folk music representing several continents and many centuries.

The head of the agency had assumed that this leader would have a great deal to offer the group of young men because he labored under the impression that "all Negroes like to sing." The leader accepted the director's recommendation and prepared himself with sheet music and several song-books and chose for the first meeting a room with a piano.

It was fortunate that he had had little experience in leading groups, for he came with very few preconceived notions and related himself easily to the new group. The boys sat in orderly fashion around a table and greeted the leader with friendly reserve. He introduced himself and asked their names. One of the names interested him and he commented on the pleasant sound of it. The boy explained that it was of French origin. Someone in the group laughed. The leader expressed curiosity about this and after some verbal fencing, one of the older boys in the group blurted out: "Your name is French too, isn't it?"

The leader, who hadn't thought much about the origin of his name, admitted that his parents were born in France and noticed that the boys seemed assured by this statement. He paid little further attention to the incident and went on to tell of his interest in music and songs. There was little response and the young leader was somewhat at a loss. There he was, prepared to bring beautiful and interesting songs from all over the world to the group, his brief-case bulging with rare music, and the tuned piano waiting. The group did not take to his suggestion that they try a few songs, but remained completely passive.

Someone had told him that it might be necessary to take a good deal of initiative in the beginning and pull the boys along, since they "did not usually know what they wanted." He did not feel too comfortable about the suggestion but was not sure enough of his own ground to do what he would have liked to do, namely, ask the boys for their suggestions. He got up, opened the piano, played a few chords, and tried a well-known popular song. As he played, he observed the group. They seemed

pleased enough but did not join him as he began to sing the familiar words. Perhaps, he thought, they would like a different song and brought another one.

After twenty minutes of this experiment in "pulling youngsters along" the leader was quite sure that he was on the wrong track. He left his music on the piano, sat down at the table with the boys, and remarked that they did not seem interested in singing. One of the boys, seeing the leader's position and wanting to be polite, told him that they liked music "okay." The leader, sensing that he wanted to say more but did not quite know how to do it, took the initiative: "Perhaps you would like to do something else instead." When he saw one or two of the boys nodding, he asked what they had in mind.

"Are you going to be our new leader?" one boy asked.

"Yes," Mr. DuBois said, "if you want me."

"Sure," several boys called.

"Do we have to meet in this room?" the older boy asked.

"I don't know. Why, don't you like it?"

There was whispering among several of the boys until one of them said, "We'd like the room upstairs with the blackboard on the wall."

After searching the eyes of the group, the leader smiled, being completely disarmed by their charm, but obviously not understanding what they were driving at. They smiled back at him, and it was obvious that the ice was broken. "Would you fellows mind telling me what you want to do?" he asked, "you certainly keep me in suspense!"

The boys laughed, enjoying the victory that the leader had granted them. The older boy swallowed once and then said in a low, somewhat embarrassed voice: "We want you to teach us French."

There was a complete silence after this announcement until the leader had searched the faces of the boys. He saw that these were expectant, eager, sincere eyes. They apparently meant what their spokesman had said. He glanced at the piano, the folk songs, the group, and then realized that the boys had decided to use him in a different way than he had imagined they would.

"I came prepared to teach you songs," he said smilingly,

"but if you fellows prefer for me to teach you French, I will do the best I can. How did you know I could teach French?"

The older boy spoke again. He explained that they had interviewed the director and had inadvertently learned of the leader's French background. They had first realized it when they had heard his name. Since many of them came from French stock, this had been the common bond between the group and the leader. Several of the boys gave some very practical reasons for this request, explaining that they were in high school and needed a better knowledge of the language. Others had no other reason but that they were interested in it. Very obviously the language had been used in their families when they were small and a better use of the language meant to them a closer tie to their own background and families.

Since the leader was flexible enough to permit the boys to use him in the way which has meant most to them, he established in this session an excellent relationship, and stayed with the boys for two years, teaching French in the beginning. Later on, as they had occasional parties, he had the opportunity to do the thing that he himself was so fond of, singing and playing, wisely using many French folk songs.

This example illustrates not only the need for flexibility on the leader's part but also the theme of the chapter: That without relationship, skills cannot be applied successfully. Here is what happened in Mr. DuBois's group: He failed to get response from the boys when he attempted to use his skills for a program that had meaning to him. Instinctively he waited until he discovered what the boys wanted. At this point he got a response from them because he had established a sound relationship and was then able to apply some of his skills.

Like Mr. DuBois, many leaders know instinctively which factors influence relationships between adults and young people. We do not believe that the concepts listed in this chapter are necessarily new ones, and leaders have undoubtedly used them without perhaps being conscious of doing so. The reason that they are stated here is to supplement our sound, instinctual approach with a more conscious knowledge. It is one way to eliminate the hit-or-miss method which we all agree is not necessarily wrong, but not good enough.

IN BRIEF

Relationship is the transmission belt without which the dynamo of human energy cannot reach its objective. It is expressed in feeling tones and is more significant than skills. Skills are tools, relationships are the heart. Without relationship, skills will be of little or no value.

Essentially, the building of relationship is a natural talent, a gift which cannot be acquired by knowledge only, but some factors can be named which affect relationships.

1. *The individual relives his primary family group experience in any other group to which he later belongs.*

2. *Aggressive behavior may be a call for help.* Aggressions, which are part of normal behavior, are often expressed most strongly when an individual feels insecure. They are a crutch and cannot be taken away without substituting something that gives more security. If they are no longer needed, the individual will give them up himself.

3. *Young people need to test out their leaders.* Just as leaders have difficulties in meeting a new group, so children have theirs. If they can be helped to express themselves and to release some of their feelings against adults built up in the past, the leader will aid his own relationship to them.

4. *People form patterns of reaction.* Some of the individual's behavior patterns are undesirable but the leader should not perpetuate them by behaving as other adults have before. A young person deprived of love or food needs more of both. If one knows how much to give and how to increase the better diet through the group process, his relationship will be sounder.

5. *Behavior expresses underlying feelings.* Because one cannot always see the reasons and purposes of behavior, he may find it difficult to understand it. But his understanding of behavior will determine the youngsters' ability to participate in groups.

6. *An orderly group is not necessarily a good group.* Often leaders or teachers depend on attendance laws or house rules rather than their relationships and so fail to develop natural leadership material.

7. *When to be active or passive depends on what the group needs.* One may feel like interfering in a situation because it bothers him, while the group may need to work it out alone. Or one may feel like sitting back and watching, while the group may need active interference. The development of the group or the

individual is more important than the accomplishment of an immediate project.

8. *A leader can mean many things to many boys.* If a leader can permit a group to use him according to their needs, his relationship will be sounder. The real skill is not the bag of tricks, but the ability to discover how to mean most to his group.

SUGGESTED READING

Freud, S., *New Introductory Lectures on Psychoanalysis*, W. W. Norton, New York, 1933.

Good for Whom: Leader or Group?

IF MR. DuBOIS HAD INSISTED on doing the things which had most meaning to him, he would have met his own needs and lost the group. Instinctively, he realized that the group did not want to use the skills he first had to offer. Another leader might have insisted on doing the thing that he could do best. This would not necessarily be a selfish leader, or a poor leader, but one whose own needs were confused with the group's needs.

LEADERS ARE PERSONS TOO!

Leaders do have needs, many different needs, just as group members do. Often when they are not met the leaders get tangled up. The concept of the leader as a person with real needs of his own is of real importance, since it can help us to become more aware of ourselves and gradually enable us to distinguish more clearly between our needs and those of the children we serve. If we continue to pretend that the leader is *not* subject to the same laws as the children and if we insist upon magnifying the differences between leaders and children, we fail to get a dynamic picture of the interaction that continually takes place between leaders and groups.

Leaders as well as young people express their feelings in certain forms of behavior. Very often we are not aware of the deeper causes of our actions, but being grown-up and having the facility to rationalize, we find good explanations for actions which have quite different unconscious motivations.

For example, one may want to ask himself why he is leading a group. Whether he is paid, or is volunteering his work, he is getting something from it. The salaries, if any, of group leaders are usually so small that no one will claim to be leading groups in order to make money.

It is safe and reasonable to state that one is leading groups

because he likes young people, hopes to help them, and at the same time to get some pleasure out of doing so. No two leaders get exactly the same satisfactions from leading a group. This obvious statement is made purely to remind ourselves that the inheritance and the environment which make each of us different from all others, also make for different satisfactions in all our experiences—among them, the leading of groups.

Most of us are not aware of the fact that we frequently confuse our own needs and the needs of the group. This is to be expected, since many of us have not acquired the necessary insight. The person who has insight to recognize where his needs and those of persons with whom he works are in conflict, has developed another self. This is known as the "professional self" and in essence this is what distinguishes the beginner from the expert. It is not an accumulation of knowledge or an intellectual ability. The real difference is the degree of insight and control over his own feelings, sometimes unconscious, which the professional person develops in his training. Sometimes the leader is quite unable to achieve this goal, and at other times leaders who have never had time to study at all bring a great deal of professional insight to the job.

WHAT IS GOOD FOR THE LEADER MAY NOT BE GOOD FOR THE GROUP

The difference between what is good for the leader and what is good for the group is not always very easily recognizable. A volunteer leader who had heard about the need for more individualization within the group decided to provide a treat for each member of his group of fourteen-year-old boys one night each week. This consisted of a movie and dinner, the leader paying expenses. He reported this to his fellow leaders. They questioned this approach. Some said it did not help the group; others felt that the leader was trying to be Santa Claus; still others thought that the leader was spoiling the boys by doing things for them that their parents couldn't possibly afford; some objected because the boys had bragged about their weekly treats to other members of clubs who then put pressure on their leaders to do likewise.

This leader, a businessman who was giving two evenings a

week to his club work and spending a good deal of money on the boys, was annoyed by this criticism. He told his fellow workers that they acted as though he was doing this for his own benefit. He explained that he was the manager of a large plant, did not need any money, in fact did not need anything. All he was doing was showing the boys a good time and he could not see why this was wrong. He was particularly annoyed at the Santa Claus quip.

This example illustrates something that in one form or another is fairly common. The reason the man was so annoyed at being called Santa Claus was that it struck too close home. When he protested that he did not "need anything" he gave an indication of some of his own problems because there is no one who is without needs. Why did he defend his position with so much feeling? Was it because he was unable to understand the objections of his co-workers? Was it because he really thought that this was the best method to individualize his work with the group? Or was it because this particular arrangement was the *most satisfying to him*?

The moment we think of him as a human being with needs, just as anyone else, we begin to understand his actions. He was a man of fifty-five; he had reared four children and had always been a warm, generous person. He had been happiest in the days when his house in the suburbs was full of children's laughter and music. Through the early years of his four children, every party that could possibly have been given took place at his house, because he loved having many children around him. Five years before he became a group leader, his wife had died. During these years his two daughters married and moved far away. Less than a year before he began his weekly treats for the boys in the club, his two sons had been drafted into the army and one of them had been killed. The other son was planning to stay abroad. He was now a lonely man. His house, which had been the scene of many happy gatherings, was empty.

His strong need to give to others had developed when he was quite small and was put in charge of a crippled younger brother. He found that he was considered a "good boy" for helping his brother. The more solicitous he was, the more rewards, praise, and love came to him from his parents. His

mother was a doting, indulgent woman who gave to him as he had given to his brother. His father had died when he was in grammar school.

The pattern of getting satisfaction from giving, *to the extent of making someone else dependent upon him*, went very deep with his leader. It was not very difficult to understand why he got so much pleasure from indulging the boys in his club. It took a great deal of sensitive and understanding discussion to make him see that he was fostering dependency rather than helping the boys to become self-reliant, teaching them to be the recipients of his generosity rather than getting their satisfactions from helping one another.

Eventually he was able to see that he was not meeting the boys' needs at all, but only his own. Some of the other leaders in the training program were able to help him make this fundamental distinction. They pointed out in very tactful ways how he would never let any of the other leaders pay for a cup of coffee when all of them stopped at the restaurant on the way home. For the first time in his life, perhaps, he began to think realistically about the feelings he gave his friends in forcing them to accept as small a gift as a nickel for a cup of coffee. He stated that he did not want to accept anything from others, and even acknowledged that he, too, would feel badly if he were to accept such a gift time after time. The others could point to these mutual experiences and make clear to him that the boys might eventually feel uneasy about his generosity and perhaps become aggressive toward him, at which point he would feel them ungrateful. They were also able to help him see that in a case where the leader is the center of the group, the group would fall apart once the leader steps out.

It is necessary again to point out that this leader's motivations were on an unconscious level and that it would be false to accuse him of selfishness. As far as he knew he had the best of intentions; he was unselfishly trying to help the boys, to show them a good time, to get to know them individually. This illustration of a leader's unconscious use of the group to meet his own needs, without objective awareness of the group's own needs, can be duplicated in many different cases.

Very often, however, a leader may meet his own needs and those of his group at the same time. There does not necessarily

have to be conflict between them. The important thing is for the leader to recognize how frequently the effort to meet his own needs is rationalized as a desire to "help others." In situations where young people and their parents disagree, this danger is sometimes clearly demonstrated. Some leaders habitually take the side of the parents, others the side of the children. It is necessary for a leader to learn to accept a youngster's complaint against his parent, or a parent's complaint against his child, without his own feelings getting involved.

Leaders, particularly teachers, often find it difficult to be truly objective and at the same time warm and understanding when it comes to controversial issues. If a leader has had a very dominating, aggressive, punishing father and the members of his group speak of the harsh discipline in their own homes, the leader may say nothing, but will feel deeply for the children. The domineering and punishing father of one of his group members will be the image of his own father, and he will tend to take the side of the child by "over-identifying" with him.

This can be just as harmful as the opposite—the desire felt by a leader to be punitive and aggressive because he identifies himself with the children's fathers. In the former case, the leader may think: "The poor child, to have to live with his wretched father"; in this he may think: "Your father knows what he is doing. Why don't you behave yourself? It serves you right if he punishes you." In neither case can the leader be very objective and really understand the child as a person *by himself*. The reasons for a leader's identification of himself with the child or with the parent will be found in the leader's own childhood, in his own relationships with his father, his mother, his brothers or sisters. It is not possible in this book to give all the causes for over-identification, since they differ with each individual leader. For instance, we have just spoken of two types of leaders who identify themselves with the child and the parent respectively. Both of these leaders may have had rejecting, domineering fathers or mothers, but one has submitted to the overpowering parent, while the other rebelled against him all his life. Why does one submit, why does the other rebel? We can't know all the reasons, of course, since there are so many factors.

THE IMPORTANCE OF A LEADER UNDERSTANDING HIMSELF

But there are some things that we can know: We can say that people react differently to the same causes because no two people are in exactly the same position. Take for instance your position in the family group: You were the first, second, third, fourth, or only child. If you were the first one, you might always have been the "big brother," always setting an example, always being expected to do a little bit more than the others. You, of course, reacted to this kind of expectation in some way. You may at times have been proud to be the oldest and at other times sick and tired of always having to set examples for others. You may have been quite jealous of the younger brother or sister but perhaps were never allowed to express this jealousy openly. When you work with young people, these dormant feelings that echo your own childhood become activated.

Or suppose you have been a younger sister and spent the first ten years of your life trying to catch up with your big sister. It has been a frustrating race that will make it easy for you to understand the girls in your groups who complain about their bossy older sisters. As they talk about them, flashes of your own childhood shoot through your mind and it requires a conscious effort on your part not to identify yourself with their aggressions against the older members of the group.

Relationship to the parent is of course fundamental in the formation of personality. That is true for the leader as well as for every member of his group. The woman who had to do dishes day in and day out all through her childhood, eventually came to hate this chore and most likely still hates it today. The man who had a very harsh and domineering father will probably be very sensitive to his superior's criticisms because his pattern of relationship to authority was set very early. The things which we experienced in our formative years make an indelible impression on our personalities. Occasionally we catch ourselves saying: "I like her. She reminds me so much of my mother"; or: "I can't stand him. He acts exactly like a teacher whom I hated all through grade school."

Our deepest needs, determined in the first few years of our lives in both pleasant and unpleasant experiences, have gone deep down into our unconscious. We have forgotten about them

but they are still with us. Nature helps us forget many of the earlier feelings and impressions, and, perhaps, without this ability to forget things, we couldn't function. But, sometimes, when we work with people, some of these earlier and basic needs are brought to the surface and made conscious. As raised temperature is a sign of infection in our bodies, sudden emotional reaction to people is a sign of reactivation of long forgotten and often unconscious drives. We usually call this state of affairs "getting emotionally involved." The effect of the basic childhood pattern is often seen in the way in which a leader gets emotionally involved in his relationships with the group.

A young and very able leader was playing ball with a group of ten thirteen-year-old boys in the auditorium. The boys were playing actively. The leader noticed that it was nearly time for them to go to their clubroom. He left for a few minutes to open the clubroom and put some games on the table. While he was gone the boys continued to throw the ball. Just as he returned the ball hit the chandelier and broke it.

Somewhat impatiently the leader blew the whistle and asked for the ball. He announced that all activity would have to stop immediately because of the careless way of playing. All of the boys came over to him except two who continued to toss the ball back and forth between them. One of these boys, Bill, had been known to the leader as a rebel. He was slightly older than the others, a good deal bigger, and better developed physically. The leader had considered Bill one of the natural leaders of the group and had on previous occasions found himself in competitive situations with him.

When Bill resisted his orders, the leader felt personally challenged. He called to him once or twice but Bill kept on playing until the leader went after him, caught him by the wrist, and held it tightly while he took the ball away. Bill objected to the leader's grip and said: "You're hurting my wrist." The leader said, "Yes, and I can break your arm if I want to. I can be your best friend or your worst enemy." He released Bill's wrist, tried to relax and smile, and asked the boys to follow him to the clubroom where games would be waiting. He agreed later, in a discussion of this incident, that he was tense at that moment because to him it was a test be-

tween himself and Bill. He did not know for sure whether the boys would go with him or stay with Bill, who he knew would remain behind.

All of the other boys followed the leader into the clubroom and began to play checkers and ping-pong. After a time Bill came into the room but sat in a corner by himself and was presently joined by four other boys. The leader did not attempt to draw him into the discussion of plans for the following week, which he was making with the five boys near him. Their discussion went on and, toward the end of it, Bill and his clique joined them. When the meeting ended all the boys left together.

From this episode one gets better understanding of the leader and how his own childhood experiences affected his handling of Bill.

It was discussed in a leaders' meeting to which the leader himself brought the story. The group of leaders broke the episode down into six phases:

1. Leader leaves group and group destroys property.
2. Leader returns and stops activity.
3. Natural leader (Bill) resists adult leader.
4. Adult leader uses physical force and threats.
5. Group goes to club meeting; natural leader secludes himself.
6. Natural leader joins the group and later falls in with the activity.

The group of leaders recognized that the breaking of the chandelier had been an accident, more or less excusable because the leader had left the room. Everyone questioned the threats used by the leader, since it was obvious that he would not really break the boy's arm as he had said.

When the chandelier broke, a number of things happened to the group and the leader. The boys felt guilty and so did the leader, but for different reasons. The leader recognized that both he and the group needed to express their frustrations in one form or another. The reaction of Bill was really quite similar to that of the leader. This fact was sensed intuitively by the leader, when questioned about the use of physical force.

The leader made a very interesting contribution at this point. He first told the leaders' meeting something about Bill's back-

ground. Like his father, he was a very able, bright, and aggressive youngster with a passive, ineffectual mother and a younger sister. He was undoubtedly favored at home, in school, and in the group.

The leader admitted that it has flashed through his mind that Bill was quite similar to himself as a child. He said he, too, was never punished, was always allowed to do what he wanted, although there had often been a need for restriction or disapproval. He rationalized that he wanted to handle Bill better than his father had handled him. In the discussion it became quite obvious that the leader had, for a moment, felt as though he, himself, was young Bill. His own unmet need for restriction or punishment was "projected" on Bill and rationalized as Bill's need.

The leader realized that while it might be necessary for Bill to be restricted, it would have to be done by someone who first could accept him completely and have the relationship which would make such restriction a constructive, growing experience. It became quite obvious that the leader had first acted out his aggression, prompted by his feeling of guilt for having left the room and then finding the chandelier broken; and, second, had met his own need for punishment by using Bill as the object.

Inasmuch as the leader had felt free to raise questions himself about his way of handling the incident, it was possible for him to develop some insight into the way in which he had mixed up his and the group's needs. He felt, after discussion, that the incident could have been handled more constructively had he been clearer about himself and known how to be more objective about the boys. He believed it would have been more helpful for him to recognize the fact that it was a mistake to leave a group of thirteen-year-old boys playing ball alone in an auditorium with a chandelier. He could have been more objective about himself and therefore less emotional about the way in which he stopped the game. It would also have aroused less resistance in Bill and would not have provoked the behavior which had led to the threats and physical restrictions. While it was possible that Bill would still not have given the ball up voluntarily, the leader, if he had been less tense, could either have left the room with the other boys, thus making it

possible for Bill to give the ball up by himself, or he could have recovered the ball in a more good-natured way.

This episode shows one way in which a leader relived his childhood pattern in a group. Another example shows how an adult was prevented from using firmness when called for because of lack of insight into her own self.

A LEADER'S OWN CHILDHOOD A CLUE

The leader of a group of ten-year-old girls discovered several of them in the yard near the private nursery school where they came to eat lunch. The arrangements had been made between the City, the Board of Education, and the school officials. The leader, an experienced young woman, was inside the school building where, on the ground floor, the tables had been set for forty-five children for lunch. The leader had two assistants and most of the children were seated.

She saw through the window that five girls who were to eat at her table had started a fire in the yard with some dry twigs and some old paper. The leader who was responsible for the lunchroom went out to bring the girls in. All complied but one who refused to come inside, and insisted on continuing to play with the fire. The leader was in a difficult position: Inside were over forty youngsters with two inexperienced assistants. Lunch had to be served within the fifty minutes allowed for recess from school and she, who was responsible for this period, found herself outside in the courtyard with one child who was fascinated by the rapidly spreading fire. Since there were several dry Christmas trees in the pile of wood, it was not possible to put it out quickly.

The leader knew the child and her interest in fires. She was the only child of a mentally sick mother, and had no father. Not long before, the mother had burned the child's finger over a gas flame as punishment. The leader, knowing this, felt instinctively that the child's playing with fire was somehow related to the painful experience she had had with her mother.

This knowledge was one factor that decided the leader's action. The second factor was her over-identification with the girl. Due to her own mother's chronic illness, the leader herself had been raised by a foster mother and had suffered

some very cruel and harmful punishments. When she was nearly thirteen years old, she had run away and was rescued by the police and a distant relative. After many years of carefully planned living, the leader had been able to make an adjustment within herself. She had married and had two children of her own. She had sworn to herself never to do to any child what her foster mother had done to her. Her husband had occasionally told her that she was spoiling the children. She had told him that she could not help herself.

At this critical moment in the yard, her own needs very clearly interfered with those of the child. She recognized intellectually, and afterwards in discussion with her supervisor, that she should put her arms around the child and take her into the lunchroom, but she was afraid to use this method, which required firmness and perhaps physical force, because of her own background.

After talking to the child for a few moments, being aware at the same time of the growing noise inside the lunchroom, she gave up. She told the child either to come in or leave the yard. The child did leave and the leader went to the lunchroom where the children had grown quite restless. Several were fighting; some were chasing each other; there was a broken plate, and her two assistants were frantic. The leader plunged herself into the turbulent situation and concentrated all her energies on calming the group and getting lunch underway. She was only dimly aware of the fact that the little girl who had left the yard could easily come back.

Once this thought dawned on her, she went to the window, but the little girl was not there. A few minutes later, however, a staff member dashed into the lunchroom announcing that a fire had been started in the basement. The leader saw at once that her decision to send the child out of the courtyard had been unwise.

The incident, and the way she handled it, brought her face to face with the fact that her emotional difficulties, created by experiences in her own childhood, seriously interfered with her work as a group leader. Having realized her problem, she discussed it with her supervisor and took appropriate steps to get help for herself. ✓

We are all familiar with situations in which youngsters are

"fresh" or express their dislike for us in various ways. Most of us know that in every group there are children whom we like more and some whom we like less. While we do not let those feelings show, and make a point of telling the group that to us everyone is the same, nevertheless the fact remains that they are not the same. There are some whom we actually dislike. Many leaders do not admit that this is so. They feel that they have no right to dislike children entrusted to their care and are very careful to hide such feelings; sometimes, they bend over backwards to make sure that they are fair.

HOW LEADERS AFFECT GROUP MEMBERS

It is wise to admit that our own feelings enter into our group relationships. Just as the different members of the group affect us in different ways, so we mean something different to each youngster in your group. If you were to ask the fifteen members of your group of whom you remind them, you would get fifteen different answers. You might remind one of his father, another of a teacher, another of a certain neighbor. This "reminding" is based on more than a physical resemblance. You probably do not look or talk at all like the people of whom you remind the youngsters, but your personality has an effect similar to that of the individual with whom the child identifies you. With a young group the very fact that you are older, more competent and independent than they, is often a reason for resistance against your authority.

We must remember that the young person's resistance is not necessarily directed against us as individuals, but rather as symbols of the adult. Take a boy who, before coming to his club meeting, was scolded by his father for a bad report-card and compared to his younger brother who did well in school. The boy might have been told that he could not go on a picnic that the club had planned. As he enters the clubroom, he is greeted hilariously by a few of his friends and one of them shakes his hand too hard or slaps him on the back with great force. This may be just enough to set off a series of acts for which eventually the leader admonishes him. Knowing nothing of what has gone on at home, but having noticed that he was a little edgy when he came in late, all the leader does is to tell

him to "take it easy," but the boy answers with a torrent of rebellious words. He may say that he is sick and tired of being pushed around and no one is going to tell him what to do. He may say that he prefers to stand rather than sit and who the dickens is the leader to tell him what to do.

At this point the leader must be aware of his own needs as differentiated from the boy's needs. If he has a strong need "to be respected," he may take this onslaught personally. He may not be immediately aware of the fact that he just happened to be the target of the rebellion and that some of the things being said are really meant for the boy's father, to whom he cannot express them.

BEWARE OF HERO WORSHIP

On the other hand, the leader may become attached to a youngster to whom he is the symbol of goodness and patience. A little girl's admiration and worship undoubtedly does things to one's ego. Without being always conscious of it, the leader will try to maintain such a relationship because it is satisfying to be loved and admired by the child. It is therefore somewhat difficult to be fairly objective about her needs. The leader may, in fact, unconsciously foster a relationship to the point where it harms the girl's adjustment in the group. Teachers' pets are examples of dependent children who avoid competition with their classmates and avoid the problem of adjusting to their group by getting all their satisfactions from the adult's praise. Naturally, a teacher of forty children will take to a bright, calm, intelligent pupil who does her work, never talks out of line, never comes late, never indulges in mischief. This pupil is a real help and, in a way, is very much like the teacher herself, or rather as she sees herself. The adult will consider her as an assistant in many ways and reward her co-operation. As she steps out of the classroom to talk to a parent and the bright one is left in charge, she deepens the cleavage between the group and the girl. The child who has not yet achieved the one thing that she needs most—to be liked and accepted by her contemporaries—is prematurely put in a position where she is acting like an adult. Of course, since she is not a teacher, she does not eat in the teachers' lunchroom nor meet with other teachers

at night, socially or professionally. But neither is she welcomed in the children's lunchroom, nor do they clamor for her friendship after school. In fact, she is not quite herself and the gap between her intellectual and her emotional development, which the teacher is deepening, will eventually show in her life.

Whenever we appoint a member of a group to a position of leadership (which in itself is a questionable procedure) we may want to consider *whose needs we are meeting*. The problem can be illustrated in a different setting. A group of fourteen-year-old girls, living in a cabin as part of a work-camp program, embarked on one of the projects in the potato fields. The leader worked with them digging potatoes, and found that Mary always had the row next to hers. She noticed that Mary worked harder than anyone else, did not ask what time it was every ten minutes as did the others, did not call for a drink of water very frequently, nor complain of the heat. She worked steadily and neatly, filling her basket more quickly than the other girls. Even when the calls for rest grew to impatient shouts, Mary worked on. When the leader dismissed the group for fifteen minutes and permitted them to walk across the fields to the brook for water, she noticed that Mary did not go, but waited until she could go with the leader. Although the leader suggested to Mary that she might want to go with her friends, she enjoyed the company of this quiet, able child too much to realize how far away Mary was from her group. All through the four-week camp experience, Mary got her greatest satisfaction from doing things for the leader and from getting her approval.

In the evening, after the children were in bed, the leaders sat under the maple tree, talking of the day's work. If all children were like Mary, work-camp would be sheer pleasure! They would tell Mary's leader how much they envied her for having such a good little helper. She would tell them that Mary's mother was in an institution with an incurable illness and that she wished she could adopt Mary. She said that she loved this child very dearly, as though she were her own.

About ten o'clock one night a commotion was heard in Mary's cabin. When the leader threw the beam of her flashlight into the bunks she found every girl under the covers pre-

tending to be asleep, and Mary, standing in the corner, sobbing bitterly. For a long time the child refused to tell what had happened, and not until the next day did the leader learn that the group had treated Mary very badly. At first they had taken away her flashlight because they knew that she was afraid to go without a light to the outhouse behind the cabin in the woods. When Mary had tried to borrow a flashlight, the planned action of pretending not to understand went into effect until Mary in desperation tried to get one of the flashlights. This was the prearranged signal to pile on her and beat her up. The group had reacted to the leader's favorite child. While the leader was able to make some superficial adjustments between Mary and the group for the rest of the season, the child's fundamental needs were not met in the group situation. Undoubtedly she profited little from the experience of living with the group, although both she and the leader got satisfaction from each other.

There is, of course, a real question as to whether Mary should have gone to camp in the first place and whether she needed at this point of her life a group experience as much as she needed a mother substitute. If this same leader had been assigned to Mary in a different capacity, she could have probably been very helpful to her. Very often our purposes in sending children to camp are not clear and we talk about it as lightly as we do of the purposes of any group experience. We say that it is good for children to be away from the city and enjoy the country air, in the same manner in which we speak of keeping the youngsters off the street.

WHOSE CHOICE OF ACTIVITIES?

Sometimes the confusion between what the leader needs and what the group needs is much more obvious, particularly when expressed in the choice of activity. A leader might have been brought up with the idea that it is good for him to be able to accomplish very difficult tasks. Perhaps his father loved him more when he kept his troubles to himself and did not cry. Such attitudes fostered in us when children will determine our feelings toward children in our groups. That is only natural. But as leaders of groups, we will have to learn to go beyond the

step of simple identification and learn to discover the needs of the other person quite apart from what seems natural to us. It may be very necessary really to understand a youngster who cries very easily. It will be hard to do so if the folks back home called us a sissy every time tears came to our eyes. Even though it is hard it is part of our job. Quite aside from the patterns which were set long ago, we all are still growing persons with changing needs, no matter how old we are now.

A young and impressionable leader of a group of Campfire girls, much preoccupied with spiritual values, tried very hard to read poetry to one of her groups. Good poetry helped her at this phase of her life to clarify her thinking on spiritual values. It was hard for her to accept the fact that the girls in her group preferred to read funny-papers. Their need was for stimulation of their fantasy, identification with romantic heroes, and other highly imaginative experiences. The young leader questioned her ability and the girls' sincerity at the same time.

A leader of a troop of boy scouts felt most satisfied when he could get his group of boys to climb the steepest possible mountain, in the shortest possible time, with the heaviest possible equipment. He was a very driven person whose own somewhat neurotic needs for accomplishment could be understood in the light of his own background. Because the youngsters needed to worship their leader they followed him for some time. Deep down they disliked the strenuous, exhausting marches, and envied other troops that had a pleasant, relaxed time. They never said so, but their behavior at home and in school was often irritable, forced, high-strung. Their needs were not being met by what met the leader's needs.

This last example serves to clarify the seeming contradiction between the previous chapter on relationships and this one. We have said that relationships are fundamental in working with people. We have just given an example where a leader had the relationship but did not use it as effectively as possible. It would seem, then, that one can build all kinds of houses on the solid foundation of relationship. Relationship is only the beginning. The next step has to be an awareness by the leader that he is a person with his own needs, and an objective understanding of the group and *its* needs. This awareness is expressed

in the everyday work in terms of activity or program. This discussion of leader needs and group needs has given the theory, and the following chapter is the application of this theory to the daily practice of program in group work achievements.

IN BRIEF

Once relationship has been established, the leader's ability to function in the group process depends on the degree of understanding and of insight he brings to the group. The leader not only gives but he also receives satisfaction from the group. Where he uses the group, consciously or unconsciously, to meet his own needs and not the needs of the group he is not fully effective and may even be harmful. If the leader is able to meet his major needs outside of the group situation, if he is a person who is well-adjusted in his emotional and social life, he does not have to use the group for satisfaction. He can be more objective and is in a better position to decide whether his own activity is good for him or the group. We have an ideal situation when the leader gets his satisfaction by meeting the group's needs. This will be expressed in practical terms by the way in which he runs his program.

SUGGESTED READING

Horney, Karen, *Self-Analysis*, W. W. Norton, New York, 1942.

Program: Ends or Means?

THE PROGRAM CAN BE like a very exciting and stimulating ride in a train as long as the leader remembers where the train is going. The ride in the train is the means of getting toward a definite goal. The program is the means to an end. If the engineer or leader does not know where his train is going, the passengers just ride for the fun of riding. In that case the program, the ride, is also the goal. A train-ride in itself can be great fun and so can some interesting activity. But sooner or later people have a right to ask: Where are we going?

NOT WHAT, BUT HOW?

It does not really matter whether a group has few or many activities. It all depends on how they are carried out. Programs can be evaluated by asking *how* they are done as well as *what* is done. One can have a very worth-while activity which, if not related to a worth-while goal, may mean very little. On the other hand, activities which are considered "ordinary" may have a great deal of meaning.

Take basketball. It is often not regarded very highly by spokesmen of so-called "cultural" or "enriching" activities. The following illustration shows that basketball can be a very profitable activity, while dramatics, for example, can be worthless if not properly used.

The Junior Varsity team had a coach who deliberately used their interest in sports for the purpose of "building a team." To the leader, sportsmanship was the goal, basketball the means. In addition to his training in physical education, he had thought and read much about competition and what it does to people. While he accepted the fact that a certain amount of competition is healthy, he saw the pitfalls in using it as the major incentive for maintaining a group. He was known for his unusual ideas. In speaking with other club leaders and

coaches he often pointed out the fact that coaches frequently excel in technical knowledge and fail to have insight into the needs of individuals and understanding of the mechanism of operating a group. He emphasized the point that he was not trying to develop professional ball players but people, and that a ball team was a fine medium with which to do it.

He had learned over the years that the ones who most need the physical skills and the satisfaction from playing often do not get the chance, because insecure and timid boys usually do not get on the team. They know how a Varsity is set up and realize that they are not good enough. They either accept the fact that they cannot make the grade or rationalize by saying that they do not like the game. This leader felt that the way our teams are often set up provides opportunity for those who already can play and ignores the ones who cannot. He therefore insisted on more time for practice than for playing and held competitive games to a minimum. To him the practice hour was the time in which he could develop boys who did not come out for games but needed activity for physical or emotional reasons. In those practice hours, he was careful not to overemphasize his interest in the weak players but helped each one by starting at the point to which he had developed. He used his position as an adult and coach to create an atmosphere in which any kind of ridicule or solicited praise was out of order. He made it a point, in the beginning of each season, temporarily to exclude a few of the "big shots"—those who could play well and were impatient with the ones who couldn't.

He insisted on rotation of members in the Varsity. When stronger players, concerned only with winning, objected to the inclusion of weaker players, the coach told them that it was their job to play the best they could. In other words, his team's ability to play included the responsibility of teaching others less able, since the group was always more important than the cultivation of skills in a few. While he lost some star players in some seasons by insisting that every member was as good as the next, he developed over the years a reputation for being one of the fairest coaches, on whose team everyone could get his chance to learn.

Another of his arguments against too much stress on competition was that youngsters should not be taught to compare

themselves continuously with others, but to learn to do the best they can and to accept themselves on that basis. He felt very strongly that it was unsound for people to look for the yardstick of their own accomplishments by comparison and competition with others. It is necessary for people to learn to trust themselves and to stand up for their convictions, if necessary, against others. He thought that we develop "yes men" if we encourage persons to expect praise from others rather than learning to depend on themselves. When it came to arguments about how well or how poorly someone had played, he would always ask whether he had done the best he could. He assured them that this was what counted, rather than their comparing themselves with someone else. This policy, constantly stressed, had the effect of permitting everyone to be taken at his own value rather than in comparison with "absolute" performance.

BEYOND COMPETITION

His strongest argument against competition as an educational method was made for those who rationalize that competition early in life prepares people to meet it later. He asked the defenders of the theory whether they would advocate that youngsters work ten hours a day since they would have to do this later. He was told that ten hours might be too much, depending on the age, but that a certain amount of work would set a healthy pattern. The coach agreed, stressing the point of appropriateness for each age, and the fact that childhood and youth are a period in which one prepares for the demands of the adult world. He was convinced that a Junior Varsity team was the place in which every youngster should have a chance to learn to play, and to accept victory or defeat calmly and confidently. He saw little purpose in having a so-called "cracker-jack" team composed of the best available athletes in the community.

It is not surprising that on his team individuals grew and group feeling developed. There can be no question but that playing basketball in this kind of atmosphere is extremely constructive. Observed by outsiders, his teams differed little from others—the same court, the same baskets, the same boys in shorts

and shirts, the same leather ball. The difference was in the insight which the leader developed and the objective: To help individuals adjust in their society through group experience. It is not essential for such a team to do other things than play basketball. There is no reason for them to have a meeting or to follow certain parliamentary procedures. Such devices do not represent more skilled leadership or a better group feeling. In this Junior Varsity team the program was the means. Playing basketball was the medium with which the skilled leader developed his group.

TWO DRAMATIC GROUPS

In contrast with this basketball team is a drama group in which the activity itself is the sole purpose, the end. Individuals and group are used to achieve it. The boys and girls in it are between the ages of twelve and fourteen years. It meets in a church that takes great pride in its community program. The coach is a well-paid specialist who knows a great deal about acting, the building of scenery, make-up, and lighting. She picks her members on the basis of their ability to act and is well-known for her finished and delightful performances. The routine of the drama group is well-established. Meetings take place regularly and on time. Plays are read and tryouts scheduled long in advance. Members who are absent three times without an excuse are not readmitted. If one is late for rehearsal, he pays a fine into the group treasury. It is the most orderly and best-run group in the church and in the community. There is always a waiting list for members and the tickets for the yearly performances are sold out well in advance. The group is self-supporting and the program books are supplemented with paid local ads. The drama club, in brief, is the pride of the town.

Since a finished performance is the goal in this group, casting for a play is done on the basis of type rather than need. Whoever "looks the part" and has the natural characteristics required by the role will get it. Thus a very aggressive, able, domineering girl (for reasons to be found in her own personality and her relationship to her family) will get the part

of the able, aggressive, domineering queen. The youngster who is shy, passive, and unable to fight back (again for very definite personality and environmental reasons) will get the part of the submissive, shy chambermaid.

The boy who is known for his ability to get himself out of tough spots by clever lies will get the part of the man who can never be pinned down. The fat, clumsy, slow-moving youngster will get the part of the comical fat man who gets the pie thrown in his face. Such casting according to type makes for effective performances. It does not make for better integrated human beings. From a mental-hygiene point of view, the girl who is shy and withdrawn needs to have a role in which she is required to be more aggressive and to fight back.

Another illustration shows that dramatics (or any other activity) can be used as a *means*. The work was carried on in a settlement house with an evening group membership of 300 boys and girls ranging in age from thirteen to twenty. At first most of the clubs showed little or no interest in dramatics, not an unexpected attitude. They pointed out one or two supposedly "good actors" who had been in drama clubs in previous years, but disclaimed any interest in such activity themselves. Many of the clubs rejected plans for making skits, either openly or by their behavior toward the worker whom they regarded as an outsider. ✓

The worker's goal was to use his skill in dramatics and his knowledge of mental hygiene to redirect the destructive behavior of children toward more constructive ends. He knew that he could not force them into dramatics if they were not ready for it but he also knew that it was possible to help people by beginning at the level of their maturity and going on from there.

The group with whom he worked called themselves the Buglers. It was a natural group of twelve boys, thirteen and fourteen years of age, of Italian and Jewish descent. The club had been active for several years but was not running well when the drama worker first met with it. Their club leader had been drafted into the army. Six of the boys' older brothers had left for the armed forces and in two cases the mothers were working in defense industries.

When the director took the new leader into the club meeting and introduced him as the "drama man," the members of the Buglers were having a fist fight over the election of a president. One of the boys, somewhat apologetically, told the leader that "we are having a little trouble with the election." The leader said he could see that there must be some difficulty and wondered whether he might be of any help. Several of the boys came over to him and asked his name. They suggested that he as an outsider, umpire the election. In the discussion, three boys were prominent. Jim, who had been president last year, was opposed by Donald. The leader learned that Jim and Donald had grown up on the same block. They behaved like jealous brothers. Jim realized that there was a chance that he might lose and began to stir up resentment over the fact that the Buglers had not been accepted in the Intermediate Division. This was a shrewd move on Jim's part, who knew how popular the demand for admission into the Intermediate Division was and that it would perhaps carry his victory in the election with it. The leader noticed also that one of the boys, Paul, sat close to him and gave the impression of being a deprived child, hungry for a secure relationship with an adult. He was the tallest of the group, but his continued attempts to get attention through clowning made the other members of the club angry with him and deepened the gulf between him and the group. The leader was aware of the group's rejection of Paul but could not tell at this stage what the real reasons for Paul's behavior were.

When the leader led the discussion into movies, the whole club participated eagerly, and at the end of the meeting he was invited to come the following week at a specified time to tell them more about how movies are made. The possibility of doing something for the forthcoming annual festival was mentioned by Donald.

At his second meeting with the Buglers, the leader, after further discussion of movies and acting, mentioned the possibility of "improvisations." The boys were encouraged to talk and act out a given subject as freely as possible until they were stopped, while the other members of the group acted as a participating audience. He made up little stories based on the

backgrounds of some of the boys. As they acted out the stories, they also acted out some of their own feelings! These little skits were not written down, but sometimes the leader kept brief notes that were later typed and used as the basis for a script. This made for fresh, crisp dialogue and overcame the difficulties of writing. Quality in expression, acting, stagecraft, and singing was maintained.

While such skills are always helpful, the worker made his real contribution by a sensitive understanding of the needs of the members and their relationships to one another. He chose stories which subtly presented some of the boys' problems as they had revealed them in informal talks. He gave the part of the aggressive, shouting boss to a withdrawn, shy youngster. He helped Donald, who was inconsiderate and bossy, to experience the feelings of a boy like Paul, who had no friends, by giving him the part of the orphan who is pushed around all the time.

Paul, who needed to become aware of the meaning of his clowning and attention-getting behavior, got the part of a circus manager who was trying to teach a man how to become a clown. For the first time, it was possible for him to laugh with the group, as his own behavior became very obvious in these improvisations. Since he himself thought it absurd, the boys laughingly said, "Now you can see for yourself how you act all the time." Paul could see himself more objectively and the experience made a difference in his behavior. The boys thought Paul was "pretty good" and should get parts in the forthcoming festival which had been planned by the administration on a community-wide basis.

While the improvisations were good fun, the boys frequently overacted and enjoyed a good deal of horseplay. The leader saw that the horseplay usually began when the boys became uncomfortable about some of the inner conflicts that they were revealing in their play. He succeeded in bringing them back to the business at hand by patient and firm handling. At the same time he expected, and got, some aggressions as a result of it. Since after a few weeks the improvisations were being considered rehearsals for the festival, he could use the coming event as a realistic justification for the use of authority and thus deflect the aggressions from him toward the festival.

THE QUESTION OF AUTHORITY

The problem of authority was met squarely when the Buglers went into the auditorium with six other adolescent groups, all of which had been making plans for the festival. The groups gathered on the stage to co-ordinate their various skits and songs. There were some seventy-five children in the auditorium, boys and girls ranging from thirteen to eighteen years of age, all eager to do their share. Just as Paul and Donald had to learn that they were only members of a group, so all the boys in the club had to come to the realization that they were a club among other clubs, who like themselves were a part of the community. The presence of several groups in one place made it necessary to use authority and discipline.

Occasionally the Buglers were asked to leave the auditorium for a while and play in the gym. Such requests were made when the Buglers, as the youngest group, enjoyed themselves while waiting by climbing the balcony, dislocating the spotlights, or using the microphone for hilarious announcements. Occasionally, individual members in this and other groups were excluded from rehearsals for a specified time.

Actions of this kind are strong medicine and cannot be given very freely. If administered improperly, they may do a great deal of harm. We must always remember that most young persons have a fairly clear idea of what is right and what is wrong. When they disturb the group or break a rule, it is necessary for the adult to express his understanding and disapproval at one and the same time. At such moments in the lives of young people well-meaning adults often commit a serious sin. They damage the ego of the young person, by saying: "You're a bad boy"—saying it so often that they no longer stop to realize what they are actually saying; but the youngster who entered upon life only a few years ago feels very keenly the impact of this simple statement.

Such a statement, and others like it, if repeated over a length of time, damage the ego, have a profound effect on the self-respect of the individual, and are often the beginning of a twisted personality. They have no place in a setting that prides itself on understanding people. They must be as severely prohibited as alcohol for minors. As a matter of fact, alcohol is

much less harmful, because the effect wears off after a short time, but the effects of such statements do not wear off. They are felt by the person to whom they are addressed as a rejection. Like a piece of merchandise that is thrown back he is "no good." It is necessary sometimes to disapprove of an *action*. It is against all mental hygiene laws to reject the *individual* who has committed the act.

In brief: When leaders take steps such as the one described for the Buglers, it is essential that they distinguish clearly between disapproval of an action and rejection of an individual. In as complicated a situation as an auditorium with many children in it, the leader was, of course, not always able to talk with each individual. Nevertheless he was able to accept their need to run wild without rejecting them.

These considerations are all part of the thinking that goes into the use of program as a means to an end. The leader of a group can make a definite contribution as long as he remains aware of the place that program should have. But even when one accepts the thesis that program is a medium, not an end, there still remains the large problem of quality. The fact that we look on program as a means does not give us license to put on humdrum activities. It is distinctly the job of the leader and the program director to find activities which by their character can inspire the individual and the group.

HOW THE LEADER HELPS PLAN THE PROGRAM

Frequently the quality of the program is left to the individual leader, who in turn escapes responsibility by asking the group members what they would like to do. This is a tricky problem because it has so many ramifications. While it is true that the group leader wants to find out what the members are interested in, he always has to be ready with creative suggestions, since children very often cannot tell you what they want. They will be definite about the things they do not like but have difficulty in stating clearly what they do like. Therefore, if pressed hard enough, they will fall back on the one or two known activities of the past. They will be suspicious of anything new—just as very small children are frequently suspicious of new foods.

Because many children are not used to being asked, their responses often seem apathetic. In reality, it is not apathy but hesitation and inability to express themselves. Therefore, the leader's job is not to ask them what they would like to do but rather to help them relax enough to be able to express themselves. That goes back, of course, to the need for a relationship. It is frightening to some people to be asked questions even when they are put in a very friendly way. It is better if the leader does not look for activity in the beginning but rather starts with a very general comment about the environment, or something that he knows is of interest to the children. For example, he may tell them of a ballgame that he has seen. He may ask about a picture on the wall in the room where they met. He may take a radio program that he has heard and comment on some particularly interesting aspect of it.

Boys will feel freer to answer questions about general topics than those of a more personal nature. Anyone who has gone to an employment office or talked with an interviewer in a different setting, will remember how difficult it was to answer very simple, personal questions about himself. Some people will forget their telephone number or their wife's maiden name at such a moment. It is often more difficult to answer questions in a group, particularly when the questioner is much older than the one who is asked.

The kind of program most helpful to the group will come from the leader's understanding of the group members, his ability to help them express themselves, and his skill in leading them one step beyond the point which they have already reached. While the program director is usually ready with general suggestions for games or time-fillers, resorting to one of the many "Handbooks" for leaders, the final choice is usually left to the leader in charge of the group.

Projects and topics involving several groups will have to come as the result of a joint discussion among all the leaders and the administrators. In choosing such topics it is important that the goal be obtainable by the group within a reasonable time. If, for example, the topic of "Housing" is chosen and every club goes to work on it, thus affecting the thinking of the members and their parents and the community, it will be necessary to expect visible changes in their housing situation a

year or two after such a large project is undertaken. Where a goal seems to be unobtainable the interest of the members will lag and the program will fail, no matter how interestingly it is carried out. A group should not be led into trying to do something beyond its ability.

The following are examples in which attempts were made to inject new or "uplifting" ideas into a group which was not ready for them.

A LEADER WHO WAS TOO HELPFUL

A group of adults was originally set up for recreation and social purposes. The program director decided that it was time for the members to do something about international co-operation. He reasoned that it was not enough for people to come together every night and play cards or plan boat-rides. He felt that they ought to concern themselves with the larger issues in the world around them. It was pointed out to him that apparently the events had not shaken the persons in this group, but he felt strongly about international problems and insisted that his people be awakened to a realization of their urgency.

While he had the best and most enlightened of intentions, he failed to take into consideration a basic mental hygiene law: One can go no further than the people are ready to go. If he had remembered this law, he might have succeeded in beginning his broader program at their level and then through slow and gradual participation the project might have become their own.

Instead, he made speeches. He told them that they should be ashamed to sit around every night playing cards while people in Europe were starving and peace was endangered by power groups. He insisted that they inform themselves on what was going on. He introduced speakers, movies, and literature on topics of international co-operation. At first the members, out of respect for him, listened to the speeches, looked at the factual movies, and bought a few of the books on display. When the speeches were over, the good people were glad to get back to their cards and boat-rides. As the leader increased his doses, they, gently at first and more firmly later on, made it known

that they worked hard all day and were not interested. When the leader, driven by devotion to his high goals, assured them that they would get used to the higher type of program they shrugged their shoulders and began to stay away. Later he found them playing cards in a place where nobody told them what to think.

This well-intentioned leader failed to begin his campaign with the recognition of the fundamental fact that one needs to understand people before he can help them. He was not aware that there are many people who do not want any help. He was eventually left by himself with his excellent ideas on international co-operation, because he could not get co-operation in the local unit. Being a very righteous and determined person, unable to learn from the people, he projected his failure on the card-players. He ended up by calling them stupid and announcing that he was not willing to continue to work with persons so backward as to play cards when the world was on fire. He will never be able to achieve results as long as he insists on ignoring basic mental hygiene laws.

SELF-GOVERNMENT THAT DID NOT WORK

A similar example of a superimposed program deals with several groups of young people. The director of boys' clubs was convinced that the one way for young people to learn democratic participation was by the organization of student government or, as he called it, a "House Council." He had used the method successfully in a different community before. In the new setting he began by asking each club to elect representatives to the "House Council" which was to meet twice a month to discuss the program and policies.

The boys, eager to try anything new, elected their representatives and in the council meetings "took over the house." Adults told them of the democratic traditions of the institution and of the leadership they expected from them. The director and the staff were shocked by the behavior of the representatives in the council meetings. The president of the council had been given a gavel which he used throughout the meeting. Each blow brought shrieks of laughter and a chorus of name-calling. The sergeant-at-arms needed several assistants to eject

member after member of the council, until only a very few intelligent and secure youngsters were left. One of these boys suggested that perhaps the members did not deserve a council. He meant, of course, that they were not ready for it—a realistic observation.

Many of them had been asked to assume responsibility at home long before they were ready for it. In quite a few families this had been necessary because it was the only way for the family to manage. Nevertheless, the dependency needs of the adolescents were unmet. In a way, these young people went to the group-work agency seeking escape from responsibility. Instead of meeting this need the leaders expected them to carry on the "democratic tradition." Being encouraged to continue in the House Council they did in reality work out their own problems to the detriment of the building by destroying property, taking all the special privileges, without being ready to exercise democratic obligations and duties. These boys, who did not always have a bed of their own, and who had suddenly been given the "right" to run a Settlement House, could not be expected to behave responsibly either at the Settlement or at home. The general breakdown of discipline followed because there was no training for their consciences, and because of the failure to establish a solid group pattern of behavior. They could not find a bridge between the freedom given them at the club and the restrictions at home. As they played one against the other, the parents eventually came out in open opposition to the club, with the youngsters caught in between. The situation became worse and ended with the withdrawal of the director who had forced his ideas upon the groups.

A WISER APPROACH TO SELF-GOVERNMENT

How the same problem was handled more positively and with more sensitivity to the needs of the individuals in a different setting is described here. There was a history of hectic and upsetting meetings in which the youngsters and council had taken all the privileges, leaving all the duties to the adults. The question of their readiness for a council was thoroughly discussed. It was discovered that some clubs had sent delegates even though the clubs had met only irregularly and took

little part in the general activities. The leaders saw that a council can be only as good as the sum total of all the clubs. It was also noted that one or two of the members had been mainly responsible for the running of the council, while the majority of the members lagged far behind. In spite of the bad situation, several of the leaders expressed a keen interest in the continuation of this form of democratic participation. As often happens when the needs of adults are confused with the needs of youngsters, there was no clarity of thinking about the natural limitations of the young people as individuals and as a group. While every leader admitted in the discussion that he would not give a fifteen-year-old boy control over the budget, he would speak glibly about "sharing responsibility" with the House Council. It seemed as though the mere multiplication of individuals would magically change their capacity for responsibility. Closer examination of a typical fifteen-year-old member led the leaders to see their lack of concrete and realistic thinking. They saw that giving adolescents too much responsibility could be as harmful as the opposite course.

After accepting the fact that their own desire for a council had tempted them to push the young people into it on the ground that it was "good for them," they were ready to consider finding out just what interest the boys had in it. Surprisingly enough, the leaders most concerned admitted that they did not know how to approach the boys in regard to the question. Some of the more experienced felt embarrassed when they thought of asking a boy whether or not he wanted a council. Since they all admitted that this was a fairly simple question to ask, they could see that there were reasons within themselves that created the difficulty. In searching for the reasons, the leaders discussed several approaches and found them all unsuitable. When one leader finally said: "I don't know how to ask that question because the answer is too clear to me," the group of leaders saw that they had first to get to the level on which the children lived and begin to work *with* them instead of *using* them. Once this was clear, the leaders were more able to discuss possible approaches. Some who still felt reluctant to speak to the boys individually were encouraged to talk about the council to groups instead. It was considered feasible for a leader to step into the game-room, watch a checker game for a

time and when the opening presented itself, say: "There has been some talk about a council meeting. Would you tell me how you feel about it?" These simple and informal approaches to a number of groups would bring a spontaneous reaction to the council idea.

The next question to be asked would be in regard to the agenda: What do they want to talk about? Such a simple question would make it necessary for the boys to do some thinking. This would be their introduction to what it would mean to take responsibility for their own organization. As the leaders carried out these suggestions they learned that a large number of boys were not particularly interested in any council and did not care what they would talk about.

It took considerable courage on the part of the leaders to decide in their staff meeting to do nothing about the council until the request would come strongly from the membership. The anxiety about doing nothing was relieved in time, as the activities continued smoothly and none of the boys so much as asked about a council meeting, except two of the older ones who had pushed the idea in the first place. Instead there was concentration on the "democratic process" in each club, with more attention to each individual member and the development of group feeling. In brief, it was discovered that it was necessary for each small unit to be working well before overall planning could be done by the membership.

SECRETS OF SUCCESSFUL SELF-GOVERNMENT

Once the small club units are really functioning, there is real value in helping them to learn to think beyond their own group by introducing the idea of representation, leading up to a planning body for all clubs or a council governing the business of the whole agency. There have been successful councils in various parts of the country and in different settings. They have succeeded when:

1. The purpose of the entire organization was very specific and clear.
2. It had been related to the program through each leader.
3. The Board of Trustees and contributors were active parts of the whole organization.

4. The representation went up and down the line from Board of Trustees to the youngest club.
5. There was no discrimination as to age, sex, race, religion, social position.
6. The community in which the organization functioned was fully represented.
7. Mental hygiene laws were taken as seriously as property rights and safety laws.

When these conditions are met, an overall planning body can operate successfully. When they are not met, councils become artificial devices. Programs can be imposed on the whole organization just as the program for a single club can be imposed by its leader. Programs planned "from above" reflect the thoughts of board members or administrators, and through the "chain of command" eventually reach the leaders of groups, and finally individual members.

UNWISE USE OF COMPETITION, AND OF OUTSIDE PRESSURE

In one organization the people on top thought that the time had come to interest their members in the cultures of the various nationality groups in their community. While this was a worth-while attempt, the program was carried out far over the heads of the membership and actually never fulfilled its purpose. The high-light of the program was to be a folk festival to take place in the spring, and all activities of the organization during the fall and winter were planned to lead up toward this goal.

The administration was thorough and efficient in its methods, and provided each leader with mimeographed material on the cultural group he was to interpret to his club. The material was intelligently planned and cut to size. Because this was to be combined with the fund-raising drive, the program had been publicized throughout the community long before it was interpreted to the individual members. The newspapers carried editorials, the local radio station broadcast the various preparations and interviewed the leading spirits of the organization. In order to live up to the expectations thus created, the entire machine of the agency was thrown into high gear with a maximum drive for achievement on the part of each member.

Competition became one of the motivating forces in the clubs, so that by the end of the year prizes had to be promised to the clubs with the highest attendance, the most polished performance, the best voices, the best speakers. Club was matched against club, individual against individual. The group was not used to help individuals *adjust* to a larger unit, but to *perform* as effectively as possible. The leaders were under the illusion that such procedure would strengthen group feeling and did not realize that the highly competitive atmosphere fostered aggression and hostility within each unit, so that a good deal of antagonism and hate developed. None of the groups gave up or fell apart and publicity continued to report truthfully that progress was being made. Actually, however, the groups stayed together because of outer pressure rather than inner cohesion.

The original purpose of bringing the various national groups closer together had long been forgotten because of the premium on high achievement in each unit. The clubs and groups were simply too busy to see what the others were doing, even though they came together occasionally, either before or after rehearsals, when they were tense and tired. At these times, they were not interested in finding out what each other was like, but in learning his cherished secrets and tricks. The concern of each group was to find out what the other group was planning, in order to surpass it when it came to the final hour of the festival. Those groups that shared their secrets and costumes, their manner of presentation, were considered naïve and looked upon with scorn. Those who hid their secrets well were disliked and original prejudices were deepened.

None of this was apparent to the press photographers, the radio commentators, the board members or city officials, although each leader was keenly aware of the damage the overall program was doing to his group. Not only were conflicts among groups deepened but the most elementary problems between parents and children as well. Community pressure caused parents to take it upon themselves to coach their own youngsters and to give directions at home. The children would say that they were sick and tired of the festival, the other nationality groups, and their own club. The parents ignored such expressions and used their authority to make them continue.

Was this merely a question of overdoing it or was it really a more fundamental question of confusing ends and means?

THE BEST PROGRAMS MAKE USE OF EVERYDAY LIFE

If the goal is to help people to learn to live together, a festival does not usually have a very lasting effect. While it is true that some experts have seemed to have some success in overcoming prejudices through festivals, it is well to remember the day-by-day situations in which people live. Festivals and health weeks and programs designed to promote better standards usually find people on their best behavior. But in our everyday life we are not always on our *best* behavior nor our *worst* behavior but our *average* behavior. It is therefore important to plan programs that are based on the average, day-by-day kind of life that we all live, and not depend too much on special occasions. If we mean business when we talk about democracy, programs planned to promote better interracial living should be as natural and healthy as bread and water.

Once an organization has experienced living with other national and cultural groups day by day, an occasional festival or high point can be as thrilling as a Christmas holiday to a happy family. There are organizations in which the members of all national and cultural groups come together every day, in which the staff represents the various races, religions and nationalities in the community, in which the members of every group have the freedom to live their own lives and at the same time be part of the total organization. This is democracy in action, affecting everybody connected with it alike. Fund-raising in such agencies does not need high-powered, special drives, because the basis is so broad and democratic that people consider it a privilege to do their share toward its support.

IN BRIEF

If program is the vehicle—the means and not the end—we can evaluate it by asking how it is carried out rather than by looking on the bulletin board to see “what they do here.” Very frequently, program becomes a thing in itself, enforced by competition and other high pressure methods. When this is the case, those individuals who need an activity seldom get a chance at it because they are often not good enough to compete. Even such a well-known ac-

tivity as basketball can be skillfully used for the purpose of building healthier personalities while a so-called cultural activity such as dramatics can be used destructively, if the "play is the thing."

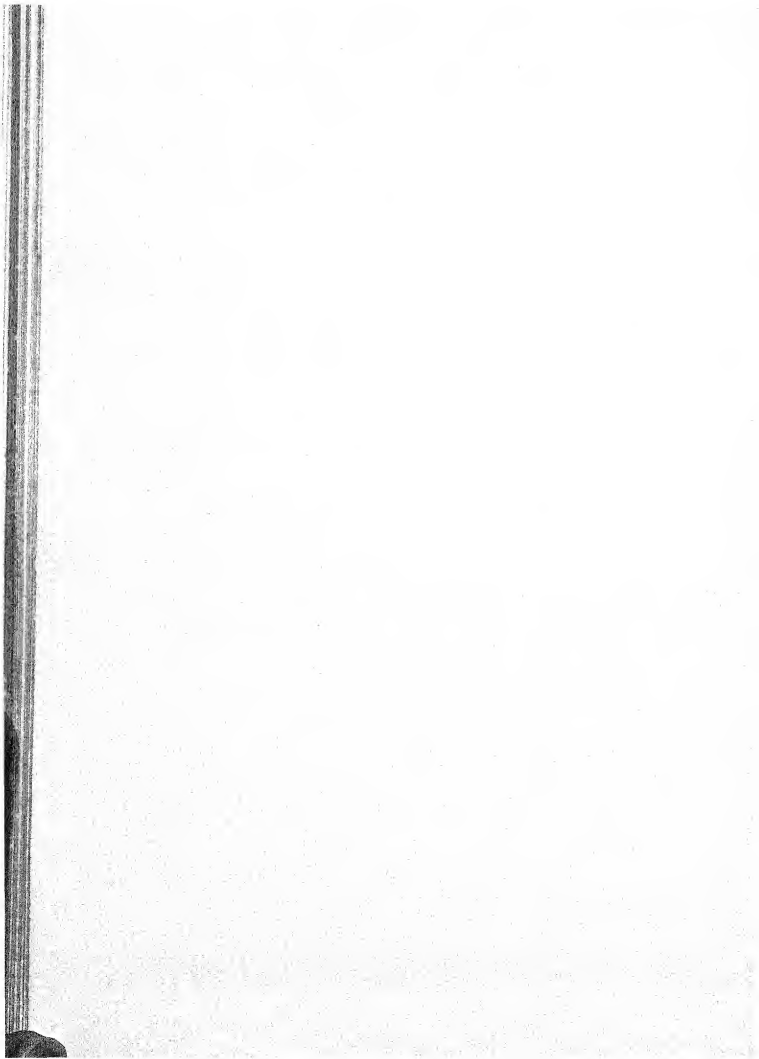
When program is consciously used as a means, it can become a very useful tool in community planning. When an organization has succeeded in translating its theoretical purposes into the daily practice of its activities, the danger of moving away from the community by well-meant intellectualized programs will be easily avoided. So-called "uplifters" are resented because they superimpose their own good intentions on people who are not ready for them. Sometimes people tolerate such attempts for a time, but eventually will express their rejection openly. When the adults go no further than the young people are ready to, they get a less spectacular program but a sounder one. Overall planning is only possible after each small unit is well-integrated.

When competition is the main motivation in promoting community-wide programs, groups and individuals will suffer even if the programs are apparently successful.

In a nutshell: The success of programs depends on *how they are carried out*, by leaders who have skill in understanding people.

II

The Group and the Individuals Within It



CHAPTER IV

Doctor or Policeman?

SOME LEADERS AND SOME ADOLESCENTS DON'T MIX

IN THIS SECOND PART OF THE BOOK, the members of the groups are the center of interest. In the first part the focus was on the leader. Of the ages with which leaders deal, the period of adolescence (roughly from twelve to eighteen years) presents the most problems. No age group is free from problems but, for many reasons, adolescence is a more challenging period than any other. One of the reasons is the fact that our society—made by adults—has never quite accepted the problems of the adolescent, and has made few allowances for them. Another good reason why leaders find it difficult at times to work with adolescents lies within themselves. To many adults adolescents present a threat, and they are afraid of them. This fear is not uncommon. It can be found among adults whose emotional age-level is nearer to that of the adolescent than they themselves realize. These adults may have grown intellectually and physically, but may not have been able to work through the emotional problems that their adolescence presented. For this reason adolescent groups are bound to make them uncomfortable and they should not be asked to lead groups of that age. They may do very well with much younger or much older people.

There are some leaders who can handle certain problems of adolescence and have real difficulty with others, particularly with what is known as "discipline."

This chapter, which might be called "Teen-age Discipline," deals with two of the most baffling problems group leaders face. "Teen-age" by itself is enough of a challenge. "Discipline" is the title for many a full length book. The two, rolled in one, seem overwhelming, and yet they come that way in real life. Group leaders are constantly asked to handle both problems together. It is of course no coincidence that the problem

of how to establish really sound control is most acute in the age group which has the strongest resistance to all control.

Why do adolescents resent discipline? Is discipline the same as control? Just what does adolescence mean? What kind of changes take place? What is one to do about them? How can young people be understood when they are like children one minute and like grownups the next? We do not know all the answers to these questions. We do know that all behavior is "purposive" and that unless behavior at adolescence is understood especially well, a great deal of damage may be done. In order really to understand the adolescent, it would be necessary to study the stages of personality development that precede adolescence. That is not possible in this book. The material is presented very thoroughly in other books and is not necessarily of interest to all the readers of this one. We shall try to stick to the practical problems that baffle leaders of adolescent groups.

ADOLESCENCE IS A TOUGH TIME

Certain characteristics of their behavior are well-known. They are "excessively egoistic, regarding themselves as the center of the universe and the sole object of interest, and yet at no time in later life are they capable of so much self-sacrifice and devotion. They form the most passionate love relations, only to break them off as abruptly as they began them. On the one hand they throw themselves enthusiastically into the life of the community and, on the other, they have an overpowering longing for solitude. They oscillate between blind submission to some self-chosen leader and defiant rebellion against any and every authority. They are selfish and materially minded and at the same time full of lofty idealism. They are ascetic but will suddenly plunge into instinctual indulgence of the most primitive character. At times their behavior to other people is rough and inconsiderate, yet they themselves are extremely touchy. Their moods veer between light hearted optimism and the blackest pessimism. Sometimes they will work with indefatigable enthusiasm and at other times they are sluggish and apathetic." (3)

Although adolescence is just one phase of an individual's development, we are frequently startled by his behavior in this

period because it seems so different from what it has been in the years preceding. Though his behavior seems to change very suddenly, the visible changes are the external manifestations of what has been taking place slowly as part of the continuous process of development. His peculiar behavior during adolescence is his way of coping with the problems this development causes him.

There are essentially three aspects of the changes with which we are here concerned: the emotional, the physical, and the social.

The *emotional changes* occur within the unconscious. We have spoken, in the beginning, of the unconscious as the submerged part of the iceberg floating in the ocean of life. In order to appreciate fully the vehemence of submerged feelings, we need to remember that there was a time in our lives when feelings were quite uncivilized. Each individual relives in a very condensed form the various stages of the development of all mankind.

The very young infant is in many ways like a little savage. He is unaware of what happens to him and has hardly any controls. His feelings are uncivilized. He becomes violently angry when he does not get his food on time. He gets red in the face, screams, kicks, hits out with arms and legs. He is, of course, unaware of why his mother is late; he has no concern except to satisfy his elementary needs. Later on, when he is hungry, he will wait until supper is ready.

Between infancy and adolescence, we develop in ourselves many controls. These controlling factors have grown out of the need to share life with people we love. But there are times in our lives when these controls break down. Under certain circumstances, if the going gets tough, we revert more and more to the uncivilized, untrained behavior of infancy. Essentially, adolescence is characterized by strong infantile drives, a recapitulation of the original instincts, at a time when the controlling factors, developed over the years, are weak. These things, as stated before, occur on an unconscious level so that the adolescent is only dimly aware of them. But he *feels* these changes very keenly and is troubled by them. He is also troubled by physical changes which are occurring now in a very uneven way.

Briefly, the following *physical changes* are taking place. "In the boy the testes are stimulated by secretion of the pituitary gland to disseminate hormones, speeding up growth in body bulk and development in various aspects. In the girl, the ovaries are stimulated by the pituitary gland to disseminate hormones which in turn stimulate rapid growth and change. Both boy and girl are getting actually ready for reproduction, although a number of years of social-emotional development must intervene before they are ready as a total personality." (4)

In other words, the adolescent is attaining bodily sexual maturity before reaching psychological and social maturity. While the unconscious emotional changes are only felt, the physical changes are visible and contribute to the confusion. The changed voices, the oily skin, the change in height and weight, and other visible changes take place at this time.

The young person who is experiencing these changes, frequently being unprepared for them, adjusts himself to them as best he can. His inner confusion is expressed in outer confusion: clothes are thrown around, hair is not combed, books are strewn all over the couch, things are misplaced, errands are forgotten. Sometimes this behavior is actually what the inner unconscious life is at this time: infantile. He cries, or he gets angry very suddenly, for what seem to the adult the slightest reasons. At other times he behaves like a grown person.

He is about to enter the kingdom of the adults who have ruled his world until now. He is leaving the childhood stage and is, in parting, experiencing a heightening of all his childhood feelings.

The *social changes* that go with the emotional and physical ones begin at home. Since the adolescent is about to leave this old environment he has to look for standards outside of the home. On the one hand he fears the independence that lies ahead. On the other he feels a great desire to "be on his own." The role of the adult is to stand by, without pushing him. There will be times when he will need the permissive protection of an adult. There will be other times when he will resent any kind of intrusion into his growing independence.

In this search for standards of his own, the adolescent experiments a good deal. He tries out friendships with boys and girls, sometimes very passionately, sometimes very casually.

He considers trades and professions. He talks and reads about them. He may discard one quickly and hold to another for a longer time. He concerns himself now with other people, much more so than when he saw everything with his parents' eyes. Because he is not really sure about these new standards that he is exploring, he frequently argues for or against them very heatedly.

Because the originally uncontrolled instincts are so powerful at this time, the adolescent sometimes tries to solve his problem by a complete repudiation of the expression of instincts. In that case he goes through an ascetic phase. "This adolescent mistrust of instinct has a dangerous tendency to spread; it may begin with instinctual wishes and extend to the most ordinary physical needs. We have all met young people who severely renounced any impulses which savored of sexuality and who avoided the society of those of their own age, declined to join in any entertainment and, in true puritanical fashion, refused to have anything to do with the theater, music or dancing. We can understand that there is a connection between the foregoing of pretty and attractive clothes and the prohibition of sexuality. But we begin to be disquieted when the renunciation is extended to things which are harmless and necessary, as, for instance, when a young person denies himself the most ordinary protection against cold, mortifies the flesh in every possible way, and exposes his health to unnecessary risks, when he 'on principle' reduces his daily food to a minimum, when, from having enjoyed long nights of sound sleep, he forces himself to get up early, when he is reluctant to laugh or smile." (5)

Then we have young people who get much satisfaction from arguing about abstract topics—as far away from their problems as possible. "The range of these abstract interests and of the problems which these young people try to solve is very wide. They will argue the case for free love or marriage and family life, a free-lance existence or the adoption of a profession, roving or settling down, or discuss philosophical problems such as religion or free thought, or different political theories, such as revolution versus submission to authority, or friendship itself in all its forms. . . . We are surprised to discover that this fine intellectual performance makes little or no difference to his actual behavior. . . . The fact that his understanding of and

interest in the structure of society often far exceed those of later years does not assist him in the least to find his true place in social life, nor does the many-sidedness of his interests deter him from concentrating entirely upon a single point—his preoccupation with his own personality. . . . When a young lad phantasies that he is a great conqueror, he does not on that account feel any obligation to give proof of his courage or endurance in real life. Similarly, he evidently derives gratification from the mere process of thinking, speculating or discussing. His behavior is determined by other factors and is not necessarily influenced by the results of these intellectual gymnastics." (5)

These are fairly typical ways in which adolescents work out their inner conflicts. As a rule they may be regarded as normal expressions of inner turmoil. Leaders of groups must remember that they play a very significant part in the life of the adolescent.

It is not difficult to understand the importance of those adults whom he meets as he moves out into the open sea, away from his family. As a rule, adolescents travel in groups. In each member of the group the unconscious life which has been compared to the submerged part of an iceberg is a powerful force; the uneven physical changes create anxiety and confusion; in each one the desire for security and his own standards is powerful. They get a great deal of comfort from being in a group.

Group leaders bear the brunt of the inner and outer changes. Most leaders have experienced extreme adoration and equally extreme rejection by members of adolescent groups. They are loved and hated intensely; it is important for them to remember that the feelings both of love and of hate are not to be taken personally but symbolically. Adult leaders outside the family group have to help adolescents gain new standards and an understanding of their own confusion. They are "safer" than the parents. Leaders do not urge them to be either dependent or independent. They do not say, "You used to be so nice and orderly, Jimmy. Now look at yourself." They do not say, "You are old enough to go out and earn a living as I did when I was your age." Leaders are in a much better position to be objective. Frequently they can do a better job with

the members of a group than with their own adolescent son or daughter. One need not feel distressed about that, because the very fact that he has been a good, loving, and understanding parent for so long may make him ineligible to be the person *outside the family* whom the adolescent needs at this time. He will always be needed as a parent, but in a different capacity.

The adolescent has joined the group because, probably unconsciously, he hopes to meet some of his needs through it. If he is able to do this it becomes easier for him to give up some of his own needs for the group's welfare. Thus the group helps the individual to be more himself and at the same time to give up part of himself to the group. In this process, the group leader plays the role of helping both individuals and the whole group.

The changes in adolescents take place on the three levels gradually, unevenly, and in a much more complex way than we have sketched, but this brief summary of the most obvious changes may help to a better understanding of the group and the individuals in it. ✓

WHAT DO WE MEAN BY "DISCIPLINE"?

Discipline has many definitions. They include such different meanings as "development of the faculties by exercise"; "training through suffering"; punishment; means taken to maintain order on special occasions. In this book it will always be understood to mean the "voluntary subordination of the individual to the welfare of the group." (6) This is the definition used by General Marshall in the U. S. Army. In this sense discipline is a goal of good group leadership, rather than a means to which one resorts on special occasions. While most group leaders will be ready to accept this definition, it is realistic to recognize the fact that many leaders use punishment when they find themselves unable to get "voluntary subordination of the individual to the welfare of the group."

Conflict exists when the leader, charged with the accomplishment of this goal, finds himself frustrated and, as the result (in the true sense of the word), "loses control." As with other frustrations, he himself falls back on earlier stages of behavior,

using threats, physical force, or emotional pressure. This is the absence of discipline on the part of the leader. It lowers the level of discipline in the group.

It is possible to avoid many of these frustrating experiences if we keep in mind the relationship between leader and group, and the limitations within individuals in the group.

The ability of the individual to subordinate himself to the welfare of the group depends on a great many factors. One of these is age. When the three-year-old stops wetting his bed, he shows discipline: he voluntarily subordinates his original instinctive behavior in exchange for love and acceptance.

If the twelve-year-old gives up his desire to carry the flag on the stage and accepts the job of usher instead, he shows discipline. Let us suppose that he is not ready for this step—that the normally strong instincts at this time are more powerful than the new controls being learned. We can then say he has “little discipline.” He is at a stage of his development in which he needs help in overcoming infantile drives, help in strengthening the controls which he should have when he is an adult. The leader finds himself in a difficult position because the various members of his group are at different points of development.

It is important that the leader keep in mind both the individual and the group. The common denominator for both is the group atmosphere, as well as the relationship. It is necessary to think of discipline always in flexible terms, depending on the goal of the whole group. What is the goal of the group at the time? Is it to exhibit military precision, or is it to raise funds for a community project? If the goal is military precision and the exhibition of good manners, the job of usher could be considered more important than the more glamorous one of carrying the flag. If the goal is to put on a show to raise money, the usher's job could be of small importance and the performance on the stage of major interest. In this case, the usher's job could be purely utilitarian and perhaps not to be expected from a certain twelve-year-old.

It would help the leader's relationship little if he were to force the youngster to do the job. Involuntary subordination is not true discipline. Here the difference between discipline in the army and in the voluntary group comes out very clearly.

The goal of the army does not change but in the voluntary group it changes constantly. Military discipline should not be used in group work to cover lack of skill. If the leader's relationships to a group are sound, and the atmosphere is permissive, calm, and relaxed, voluntary subordination of the individual to the welfare of the whole group will usually follow.

True discipline, really voluntary subordination to the group welfare, is frequently not achieved because of a wrong "group climate." A few typical illustrations of wrong climates, taken from classroom practices, which nevertheless are applicable to group work, are given:

WRONG WAYS TO GET DISCIPLINE

The *punitive climate* is one of the most frequent distortions of discipline in classrooms. A punitive climate is not identical with "a case of punishment." On the contrary, wise punishment usually does not at all imply the basic attitude of "punitiveness" of the teacher toward the child, while in a thoroughly punitive climate the pressure on children is often so high all the time that the teacher needs to make only sparse use of actual punishment as such.

However, the punitive climate is perhaps the most destructive of group morale and discipline of any classroom climate. It invariably produces these characteristic side effects: teacher shows little respect for the persons of the children in her room, being so sure she can manage their behavior by threat and fear anyway that she doesn't bother about them as human beings; the pupils usually expect absolute acceptance or rejection on the basis of the teacher's behavior code, and they usually fall into two groups—some rebel, hate, and fight back (the open "problem cases" in a punitive group) and others identify themselves with the teacher out of fear, and therefore have to become moral hypocrites in their attitude toward other children. They are suspiciously submissive as long as the teacher is present, squeal on neighbors when they get a chance, and in general, develop a holier-than-thou attitude toward their pals. The emotion of fear of reprisal and shame is in the air most of the time, teacher as well as the onlookers receiving sadistic enjoyment of the chronic type.

It is this kind of climate that breeds sadists, bullies, and hypocrites. In this type of group it is a sign of character and courage to become a *behavior problem*. The morally healthy individual is the most frequent victim of the punitive climate.

The *emotional blackmail climate* is another distortion of healthy group living. It is a variation of the punitive climate but sails under a different disguise. In the emotional blackmail climate the

teacher "loves" all children and says so at the rate of three times a minute. At the same time she rubs it in about how nice and unaggressive she is—how she will never punish anybody for doing wrong—while she drips with enjoyment of the self-induced guilt feelings of her crew. In the emotional blackmail climate, you don't get punished if you do wrong, but you have to feel like a heel for three weeks afterward. The teacher in this climate produces a tremendous emotional dependence on her, exploiting it as the only source of influence.

The results of this type of climate are these: a surprising absence of physical or other obvious violence between teacher and children, often confused with understanding and progressiveness in technique; an extreme fear in the children of the disapproval of their teacher, resulting in extended orgies of self-accusation by the children and hurt feelings by the adult leader after each case of disciplinary breach; a strong rivalry among some of the children who are the "good" ones as against those of the children who are not as emotionally close to the teacher as they.

The discipline problems of this group will be especially strong when these children move from younger childhood into early adolescence where so much adult dependence is unnatural for them. The main casualties of this climate are those who want to grow up and become independent and would rather take the rap for a mischievous act than turn into self-depreciatory introverts at the teacher's command.

The hostile competition climate. The hostile competition climate is a distortion of an otherwise healthy phenomenon in our society. Normally, a good deal of competitiveness is unavoidable, even liked by the children growing into a society where there can be little doubt of the presence of competitiveness. However, there are two things that can go wrong with normal competitive climate: one is that there may be more competitiveness than children need or can stand without developing negative character traits or defeatism; the other is that competitiveness may deteriorate into hatefulness.

The hostile competition climate may be characterized thus: everybody is whipped into aggressively competing with everybody else all of the time. Reward is given to him who proudly tramples under his feet whoever dares to compete with him. Shame falls upon the head of the child who would rather get a lower grade than feel holier-than-thou toward his best pal.

The hostile competition climate turns a classroom into a dog race. It is highly doubtful that mutual love and friendship is developed in the participants while the race is going on.

Results: Extreme unco-operativeness among group members—all organization has to be enforced by outside rules and pressures; the

development of outcasts among those who happen to be last in the line of aggressive competition and of snobs among those who happen to hold the front line easily and get more than ten times the amount of praise that their efforts deserve. The result is dependence of such groups on autocratic management, no real wish for democratic co-operating and self-management, enjoyment of punitive instance of discipline breach as an outlet of all the hostility and moral snobbishness fostered undercover.

The *group-pride climate* has a very healthy counterpart. What we mean here is the distorted case where the group leader tries to develop a strong emotional relationship of every member toward the total group, and then overfosters a feeling of vanity and conceit as related to the group as such. Good "teams" sometimes allow their team spirit to disintegrate into the climate I refer to.

The group pride climate usually develops a high degree of group consciousness of a classroom as a whole, with a variety of positive attributes connected with such development. At the same time it produces a host of potential group executioners who just wait for a moment when they can swoop down on the unlucky devil who was a stain on the group honor or reward. On the other hand, it develops a certain set of chronic rejectees and releases wild moblynching psychology against them under the cover of righteous group indignation. Violent fights or the chronic problem behavior of the constantly persecuted and despised rejectee are the main types of discipline problems engendered through a climate of this type. (7)

These illustrations of group climate refer to classroom situations. The classroom is a nonvoluntary group. But the descriptions apply to a high degree to voluntary groups as well. The group leader has more leeway and is less hampered by regulations, but he needs to be as much aware of distortions of the group climate as does the teacher.

TEEN-AGE DISCIPLINE

If we understand the demands made on the personality at this time we can appreciate the task before the adolescent. On the one hand he has to break away from emotional attachment to the family, so necessary in the recent past. At the same time that he makes this break he feels himself disturbed by biological changes and a new and strange power. Society confuses the picture further. The adolescent who is supposed to be a

child and is allowed to collect scrap is suddenly expected to be a man and win a world. While he is trained to kill, he is not permitted to vote.

Nor has society any solution for the conflicts arising from the fact that the adolescent is biologically ready for reproduction but psychologically not ready for marriage. It sets up taboos and penalties to restrain him. He is being told to hurry up and become a man and take his place in the world. When he wants to earn money, he is told that he is just a child. When he does a childlike job, he is told that he is a man.

It is not surprising that delinquency rates in adolescence are high. In any case adolescence is a difficult experience. Added to the normal problems are bad housing, poor health, low income, lack of recreation. Keeping in mind the inner and outer changes to which the adolescent is asked to adjust when submitting himself to the welfare of the group, the leader, from the height of adult security, will be careful not to reproach him for his lack of discipline.

The advantage of the group to the individual lies in the fact that its standards provide a kind of group conscience. Adolescents have strong loyalties to their club or their troop. It is as though the club is a third dimension—the individual being one, the leader another, and the group the third. There are many things the adolescent will not do alone or for his parents or for the leader if he is dealt with as an individual. But the group generates strength and encouragement to which the individual responds.

The welfare of the group is the watchword for the leader of the group in matters of discipline. By virtue of the fact that he is leader of the group, rather than parent, he can use the group conscience for the development of adolescents.

The very definition of discipline, in the sense in which we have used it, presupposes a group setting. Group discipline is the ability of all the members of the group to subordinate themselves for the welfare of the group. This ability varies with each member and at different times with different goals.

To see a group in a single situation and make the observation that it has good "discipline" is meaningless. The conclusion is not sure, either for the individual or the group, until they have been observed over a period of time and in different set-

tings. To one member it may mean a great deal of discipline to come on time. If in his home there has been rigid stress on punctuality over a period of years, he may react to it by coming to the club at all hours. If he comes on time, it may mean a great deal of discipline even though he may not be willing to abide by a majority vote in the meeting. On the other hand a boy who has repressed all his instincts and developed too much control might be showing good discipline by talking up against a majority opinion. ✓

Evaluation of discipline in a group can be made only with intimate knowledge of its members. The acid test comes when a group goes into action in a basketball game, puts on a stage performance, goes on an overnight hike. Leaders frequently find themselves frustrated because the majority of their members are unable to pass this acid test. The reason for the failure depends of course on the particular group and its leader. It is, generally wisest to postpone projects that place the discipline of the group under strain as long as possible and until the leader has a thoroughly sound and proved relationship with each member and the group as a whole. ✓ To put a barely integrated group on the stage, on an overnight hike, or on a strange basketball court, is as unsound as to send half-trained soldiers into battle. Such an experience can wreck the group and ruin its discipline. Leaders sometimes fall into this difficulty because the group presses for adventure or different experiences. *mm*

It is realistic for a leader to tell the group that it is better for them to wait until they know one another better. Try some simple experiences first. It is unwise of course to put off a group by accusing them of not having enough discipline. While this may be true it arouses resentment that prevents the development of voluntary subordination and sets up a barrier between the leader and the group.

IN BRIEF

Adolescence is the cocoon stage—no longer a child, not yet an adult. Disturbing changes take place at this time. In the emotional area, the controls over instinctual infantile drives become weakened; in the physical area, the body gets ready for reproduction; in the social area, the young person is beginning to break

away from his family and to look for security outside of the home.

In this search, group leaders play an important part, often bearing the brunt of the changes. Their attempt to establish controls depends on their understanding of these changes as well as on the group atmosphere they are able to create. Understanding is not to be confused with excusing, and freedom must not be confused with license. Firmness helps the adolescent in his attempt to build the controls needed.

Discipline has three aspects:

- the voluntary,
- the ability to subordinate,
- the welfare of the group.

All three elements need to be present. The leader's concern will have to be with all three but most prominently with the third.

SUGGESTED READING

- English, O. S. and Pearson, G. H. J., *Common Neuroses of Children and Adults*, W. W. Norton, New York, 1937.
- Zachry, Caroline B., *Emotion and Conduct in Adolescence*, D. Appleton-Century, New York, 1940.
- Brinker, R. R., and Spiegel, J. P., *Men Under Stress*, chapter 3, Blakiston, Philadelphia, 1945.

Boy Meets Girl

AN IMPORTANT PHASE in the adolescent's development is his attempt to establish relationship with the other sex. In this, the leader, because of his unique role, should be able to be of great help. However, many leaders find this difficult because of their own prejudices, taboos, and anxieties. The young person often asks in an indirect or awkward way; the leader often deals with the awkwardness rather than the real problem.

DEALING WITH THE MOST INTERESTING TOPIC OF ALL

These are typical ways in which both adolescents and adults show their confusion: The coach of a basketball team found his boys, after a game, sitting in the locker room being hugely amused by a small booklet that they passed around. They laughed and seemed embarrassed until one of them asked the leader's opinion about the booklet, which, he said, was about "the sex life of the monkey." The leader looked at what was obviously a cheap pornographic job. He tried to be casual about it, and, after leafing through it quickly, gave it back to the boys and told them that this was "junk." He suggested that the boys might think of "more important" things and read "better" books. He then made what he probably considered a skillful move by talking fast about a coming game.

Actually the leader had not been as skillful as he imagined in side-stepping the one problem which was at this time most important to the boys. They were confused about a number of things. Some, probably only a few, were curious about how babies are really made. The majority were probably more concerned with the sex act itself. Factual information about reproduction is easily obtainable but the adolescent is more preoccupied with copulation. This preoccupation with a physical aspect is natural, since only the physical part of his personality has reached the level of sex maturity. Psychologically,

he is far from ready. He is not greatly interested in the biological development of the egg or the growth of the embryo.

Some of the boys were undoubtedly enjoying the forbidden sex stimulation with both anxiety and pleasure. In a very general way they all wanted some kind of help. In a situation of this kind a leader begins the process of giving help in the same way in which help must always be given: by understanding the problem. What troubled the boys? what did they really want to know? Probably they were not very clear about it themselves and different members of the group wanted different kinds of help. To reach the majority of his group, the leader would have to start, therefore, on a simple basis, without asking many pointed questions. The embarrassed laughing would give him one clue to an understanding of where the boys stood. Before he could even hope to talk with them, it would be necessary for him to establish a less tense atmosphere. Giggling usually means tension. Genuine laughter discharges tension. He would have to begin, therefore, by clearing the air, perhaps getting a laugh to help discharge tension and to provide a more secure climate in which to talk.

It is difficult to say just how a given leader would go about this because it would depend partially on his own personality and on his relationship to the boys, but for the purpose of illustration, a description is given of how one leader met a similar situation. He looked at the booklet and back at the boys. He did not say anything, but smiled as the boys grinned self-consciously at him. He waited for one of them to give him an opening, and when nobody spoke, pointed at the booklet and asked, "What about it?"

This very simple question made it necessary, and easy, for the boys to speak. One of them said: "Hot stuff, eh?" A few of them laughed and another one said: "What do you think about it?"

The leader smiled without restraint, which in itself told the boys that he was accepting them with their problem. He said that he did not think it was particularly "hot," "As a matter of fact," he added, "the drawings are poor and do not show anything."

One of the boys took him up and asked him whether he knew of drawings that showed more. This was the opening the

leader wanted. He at first accepted their confusion simply and warmly, told them that he did not see any particular harm in such booklets, nor did he see any value. He made it clear that, if anything, such booklets would confuse them more and give them no real pleasure. They would have to learn to get along with girls naturally and comfortably, and their love life should be a source of happiness and pleasure rather than a problem. He made it plain that he did not blame them, but asked how many of the boys had a very clear idea of the reproductive process.

By that time the embarrassment had ended and the boys were in a receptive, interested mood. There was an occasional flare-up of giggling which the leader ignored. Eventually he was able to determine what he had originally suspected, that they wanted good factual information which neither parents nor school had been able to give them. ✓

CO-ED DISCUSSION

Psychiatry has long recognized the need for a better understanding of the sex problems occurring in adolescents. This viewpoint is given in a recent publication:

Adolescence, however, brings many new problems, among them of course, sexual ones. The girl, if not given simple, common-sense explanations about her feminine functions, may be frightened by menstruation or unprepared for sexual temptations, and so may acquire unfortunate attitudes that will endanger her future role as a wife and mother. The boy, if similarly unprepared, is especially apt to develop excessive fears as to the supposed consequences of certain almost universal outlets of his sexual energies—fears that may hound him endlessly, yet that could have been prevented by kindly reassurance and advice. (8)

While some leaders at this point prefer to recommend books and pamphlets to be read, others prefer to use them only as a basis for discussion. If the relationship permits it, discussion, rather than recommendations for reading, is preferable for two reasons. It provides the opportunity for clearing up misunderstanding and going into detail on points which might not be fully covered. It also safeguards the use made of the book and prevents confusion at home or on the street where the young-

sters might take the book. When the leader himself does not feel free to give help, it is preferable to get other people to do it, rather than to force himself to do it because of the urgency of the request.

In discussions about boy-and-girl relationships, it is important, as it is in all other situations, not to go further than the group is ready to go. In other words, one should not talk about things that are important only to the adult, or try to make a point, or deliver a message, beyond the interest of the listeners.

Many leaders are fairly comfortable in discussing the reproduction process or in recommending good literature. Some prefer to take a small group of boys or girls. Two recently published booklets emphasize the value of co-ed discussion of sex problems:

There is a great advantage in presenting these matters to boys and girls together. There is a growth of mutual respect and understanding, a comradeship in thinking, a bridging of frequently existing antagonisms and allaying of fears. Few married women have lived that have not wished they could unburden their hearts to their husbands and work out their problems with them only to feel too ensnared in their imprisoned emotions to speak frankly. The establishment of the sexual life as a subject of open and mutual interest, acceptable and valuable, is one of the achievements of education in groups of boys and girls together. (9)

SEX DIFFERENCES

This is not the place to go fully into psychological differences between boys and girls. However, it is necessary to remember that, aside from the general changes mentioned in the previous chapter, there are important differences between the two sexes. One of these has to do with the problem of menstruation. The physical experience requires an additional psychological adjustment, calling for more understanding from leaders of girls. As in the case of information regarding the reproduction process, factual knowledge does not necessarily take care of all of the feelings involved. There are many fears and anxieties which are not fully allayed by factual knowledge alone. There is evidence to show that many adults, and many leaders among them, carry with them taboos and prejudices

concerning sex functions. These prejudices, often unconscious, will be revealed by leaders in their dealings with young people. Leaders of girls' groups will find the chapter on "Menstruation and Adolescence," by Dr. Helene Deutsch, in her modern classic, *Psychology of Women*, especially helpful.

Another important difference between boys and girls has to do with the significance of the sex organs:

In young girls eroticism remains separated from awareness of sexuality for a longer time than in boys. This fact can be explained for the most part on the basis of anatomic differences. The erotic fantasies of boys are soon accompanied by obvious genital processes. . . . Because of the genital urge, it is difficult for the boy to deny the connection between the two.

Girls, however, do not so easily discover that their genitals are the executive agents of their yearning for love, and even if they have had orgasmic emotions and have performed masturbatory acts, they still find it easier to keep their psychologic feelings and tensions apart than do boys. Above all, masturbation can assume more indirect and concealed forms in girls than in boys. The vaginal sensations cannot be compared with the pressure of the male organ, the tension cannot always be exactly localized, excitation and relaxation can take place without conscious control on the part of the girl. The statements of many young girls and women that they have never masturbated rest on a basis of relative truth, because it may very well happen that the entire masturbatory discharge takes place without any direct conscious participation. Thus, it is easy for the girl to undertake unconscious diverting actions based on the fact that the direct excitation in the genital region is easily repressed and manifests itself in sensations in other parts of the body. Such sensations as heart pounding, pressure in the stomach, a feeling of burning in the head, light dizziness, and various other manifestations are often continuations of and substitutes for repressed masturbation. . . .

Another important difference between the sexes with regard to the relative completion of adolescence lies in their tendencies to identification. The tendency itself is not peculiar to girls during adolescence. Naturally there are differences between boys and girls as regards the objects of their identifications, their purpose, etc., but the process itself stems from the same needs of the weak ego and serves the same general end in both sexes. . . .

During this entire period young people show a tendency to turn away from reality and indulge in fantasies. But it seems that the boy's more active sexuality leads to a stronger turn toward reality and toward conquering the outside world than is the case with

the young girl. Hence an important psychological difference between the sexes: man's attention is principally directed outward, and woman's inward. That typical trait of adolescence that we discussed before—keen observation of one's own psychological processes—is as a rule more intense in the girl than in the boy. Preoccupation with her own mind continues in the woman's later life and determines two important and distinctive feminine characteristics, namely, woman's greater intuition and greater subjectivity in assimilating and appreciating the life processes. The cornerstones of these fundamental feminine characteristics are laid during adolescence.

The young man emerges less scathed than the girl from the phase of intensified identifications; in the formation of his personality he has assimilated them more successfully. True, only a few boys develop personalities so powerful and independent that they can completely renounce identifications with others. But the feminine ego seems to remain longer—to some degree it remains throughout life—in that phase of adolescence in which the tendency toward identification is strengthened. The question whether this is explained by definite dispositional elements in woman or by the boy's more active turning toward reality, is not difficult to answer. The same dispositional factors strengthen woman's tendency to identification and obstruct those of her activities that are directed toward the outside world. These forces are also responsible for other characteristic feminine traits, such as those we have mentioned above, i.e., woman's greater intuition and subjectivity. The common denominator of all these qualities is woman's greater deep-rooted passivity with regard to all life processes outside of the reproduction function. (10)

THE QUESTIONS THAT ARE ASKED

Both boys and girls in their attempts to set their own standards come to the group leader for support and help. In this search, the leaders find themselves confronted with very specific questions: "Do girls expect you to kiss them good night after a date?" "Do boys think me cheap when I let them kiss me?" "How can you tell a boy that you are in love with somebody else without hurting his feelings?" "Should you invite a boy to your house after he has taken you out to dinner?" "How far should you go in petting?" "At what age can you have intercourse?" "Do you have to be married before you can have sexual relations?"

These are samples of questions asked by adolescents either

in written form, usually anonymous, or in small groups. These questions would be asked by a large majority of young people if the leaders would let them express these problems. Very often they are not verbalized because leaders do not encourage such discussions, since they do not know how to handle them. A sense of self-protection prevents many leaders from encouraging questions to which they have no answers. Frequently they will not only find it difficult to formulate an answer but some of them have not been enabled by their parents to clarify fully the problems for themselves, even though they are years older than their groups and are expected by the youngsters to have worked through these problems for themselves. Ironically enough, many leaders have not come to grips with these problems because their own group leaders failed to help them at a time when they were ready for help. It is necessary to face this fact, rather than to expect leaders to do what they are emotionally unable to perform.

There are, however, many leaders of groups who would like to overcome such difficulties and have asked for help with them, being aware of the need for airing out problems which are hushed up in some quarters. When possible, such leaders have used specialists to do the job for them, but more often they had to do it themselves and wished they could do it better.

The suggestions in the following pages are not to be taken as a prescription, or a "model talk." They are points that have seemed to be clarified helpfully in discussions with mature leaders in various settings. The questions just mentioned ask for reassurance, indicate uncertainty about moral standards, and reflect the confusion prevalent in adolescents. It is dangerous to give specific advice without being familiar with the individual's total pattern and that of his or her family. The leader's own standards might throw them into considerable conflict with the standards of their home, their church, or friends. Usually, leaders of groups do not have very close knowledge of all the factors at work in young people's lives. They are not in a position to "advise" them. The thing to be done is just what is done in any instance when someone is unsure about a decision—help him clarify his feelings and understand his situation, thus enabling him to make a decision himself

and to take responsibility for it. It would be realistic to realize that the inability of an individual to make a decision is evidence of his unwillingness to be responsible for his own actions.

Therefore, if one is to be perfectly honest, his only direct answer to the questions is: "I don't know." The leader may have actually to say just this if the youngsters insist upon a direct answer, which they sometimes do. Of course, one will not stop there, because this, by itself, would not seem very helpful.

If the questions are asked in a group, one can use them as steppingstones into discussion, assuming that the leader knows how to get the young people to talk more about their problems and confusions. The leader's role is then that of a discussion leader rather than that of an answer giver. The purposes of such a discussion would be: first, to help them express themselves more fully about these questions than they have heretofore; and second, to give the leader the opportunity to direct their thinking toward some of the underlying issues.

The way one directs such discussion depends also on the particular cultural, religious, and racial group in which the leader finds himself. It is imperative that discussion take into consideration the morals and standards of the families and community, and must under no circumstances be limited to the leader's own ideas of what is right or wrong.

Since the adolescent is troubled by the conflict between his instinctual drives and the standards of society, the problem may have no real answer, for our society puts a taboo on sex relationships before marriage. Leaders might be of help to the group of adolescents by assuring them that their problems are shared by the majority of young people. It would be realistic to say that there exist various points of view on the solution of these problems. It would be reassuring to admit freely that, in a sense, society has created the problem because it does not allow sex experiences at this age. There have been and there are primitive societies in which such a taboo does not exist. It would be very important to assure them that they are not "bad" because they have the desire for such experiences. On the other hand it is helpful for them to know that our social codes are usually wise, for conditions in a civilized society differ greatly from those in a primitive society. Here again the leader must realize the difference between disapproval of actions and re-

jections of individuals. Leaders will want to help young people to understand the reason for their families' natural anxiety, and for the existence of social codes.

It may help very little to point out that they are psychologically not ready for a complete life experience, for they would resent this. It is harmful to create more anxiety and guilt than the young people already have. The fact that they ask questions means that they have been told about right and wrong by others. It means that they know about the physical and emotional dangers of experiences for which they are not ready. The leader does not, as a rule, need to state these dangers even though this is often the first thing he may feel like doing.

MEETING QUESTIONS FAIRLY

On the contrary, if the leader can help them talk calmly and without anxiety, he will already have made a substantial contribution to their emotional growth. If he can set a tone which is warm, calm, and permissive, he will substitute a sober and pleasant reality in place of the confused fantasies from which the adolescent frequently suffers when thinking about sex matters. The instance of the booklet passed around in the locker room is fairly typical of the way in which groups sometimes show their confusion. Occasionally they come out with direct questions meant to embarrass the leader.

A group of fifteen-year-old boys saw their young leader meet his girl friend at a nearby bus stop. At their next meeting they acted very secretively, giggled a good deal, and when the leader asked what was on their minds, one of them blurted out: "What do you do with women?" The question was asked on the street as the group was going with the leader to a nearby swimming pool. The leader was not prepared for the question. He asked what they meant and they answered in a jeering chorus: "You know what we mean." The leader felt that he had to answer as directly as possible, so he said that he had been going to movies, but the statement produced further raucous laughter. He did not know how to handle the situation from this point on but succeeded in changing the topic and, as he said, "putting the boys in their place."

Other leaders in similar situations have become indignant

or moralistic. Some feel called upon to make speeches expressing their own deep feelings about love, far above the heads of the youngsters. Others talk down to them. In very few cases do leaders succeed in being either helpful or in building a sounder relationship.

The very questions asked by adolescents indicate their confusion. They tell us that they have not had the opportunity to talk with their parents in a way that would have helped them to become more secure and to fathom the simplicity and beauty of all human relationships. Their grinning, the tone of their voices, their crude drawings in toilets and subways, tell us how much help they need. Because their parents are often not able to give it to them, the job falls on the leader's shoulders.

Why is it so difficult to understand a group of boys who asks: "What do you do with women?" What are they asking? Do they want general information about the reproductive process? Do they include the leader in their fantasy? Do they wish they were as old as he? Do they want to know whether he is married? Are they curious to know how intimate have been his relations with his girl friend? What *do* they want to know?

The leader's answer is probably that he is not sure what they want to know. If he is not sure, why not ask? He need not let them determine the time and place for the answer. If they should ask how to do a swan dive, the leader would probably tell them that he would show them at the pool the next time he is there. If they ask about his relationship to women, he might let them know that he is not sure what they are asking, but that he would like to help them satisfy their curiosity at the next group meeting.

There are things, of course, which are nobody else's business. This applies not only to questions regarding the leader's intimate relationships but may apply equally well to any other matter about which young people may be curious without having the right to an answer. For example, they may want to know how much rent the leader pays or how much money he gets for leading them. They might want to know where he lives or how many children he has. It is not only unnecessary

but sometimes harmful to give direct answers to many of their questions. Some leaders have felt that they can build a better relationship if they invite a group to their home. Such procedure may tie the group to the leader too closely, although at times it may be a perfectly natural and fine thing to do.

Many of the things in which young people are interested are in reality none of their business. Sometimes it is necessary to make this clear to them in a tactful way. It is necessary for them as well as for us to recognize and accept limitations. The leader meets the group on certain days for certain hours. He can do certain things with them. He cannot come on other days or other hours and there are things which he cannot do and problems with which he cannot help. It is very necessary that the leader avoid trying to be all things to all people.

All this will be said differently by different people, but it should always be said with real warmth, and with an acceptance of the youngsters' confusion as perfectly natural.

WHAT LEADERS ARE AFRAID OF

Besides having to face direct questions, we are often in a position where we have boys and girls together and are asked to help them to get to know one another. The leader may have a co-ed club or be asked to supervise a dance. Her own girls' club may invite a boys' club for a special part. The leader may be what has been called a "chaperon." Originally, as the Italian word "capperone" clearly shows (the wearer of a "hooded cape"), the chaperon was a woman who accompanied a young girl in public places to protect her from annoyance. Not only was her function clearly defined but she could even be identified by a certain costume. The modern chaperon wears no hood but, though she may look as attractive and young as a girl, she often has as much anxiety and concern as had her ancestor in the hood. As she has not one girl but a whole group, her task is now both difficult and simplified. While she has to "protect" ten girls, they also have what is known as a group morale and watch out for one another. She feels fairly comfortable in a large and well-lit hall, particularly when the boys' leader is there to keep an eye on his charges. She becomes con-

cerned when one or more members of her group disappear in the garden or hide in some dark corner of the stairway.

If the leader is asked what she is worrying about, she will give a variety of statements expressing fear of real or potential dangers. The final, and probably the most dreaded, fear is not always openly expressed. Some leaders, however, will verbalize their concern over the morals of the girls, their relationships to their families, their future happiness. Leaders are concerned about loss of virginity, and possible pregnancy.

Usually group leaders have little opportunity to deal with these problems. It is well for us to look to psychiatry and case work for help in understanding personality factors which go into such experiences. Sex experiences, like all experiences, are not primarily due to "opportunity" but come about for very definite cultural, familial, and personality reasons. Studies of problems of unmarried mothers show clearly that the leader may have to be more concerned with the girl's relationship to her parents than with dark corners.

One study, based on a random sample of 100 cases from an Unmarried Mothers' Agency, though written for case workers, may help the group leader to understand this better:

There are common elements in the backgrounds of these girls. Most conspicuous is the fact that none of them had happy, healthy relationships with their parents. Whatever the particular family situation, the conflicting feelings of love and hate remained a basic and potent source of unhappiness and trouble. Almost equally noticeable was the dominance of mother, the strength and the pervasiveness she played in this complex drama.

Fifty-eight out of the one hundred girls had known mothers who controlled their lives and emotional development to an extent that could only result in destruction to the whole structure of their personality. . . . The more dominating, the more sadistic, the more rejecting the mother, the sicker and more hopeless was the girl. Nor was the lot of the twenty-three girls who had known dominating and rejecting fathers much happier. . . . Relatives can play the role of parents and a dominating and rejecting aunt can in the end be not too different from a dominating and rejecting parent. . . . All of these girls had fundamental problems in their relationships with other people. Some of them could not carry on even superficial contacts successfully; others did well with casual acquaintances and friends but were unable to enter into a close and intimate relationship with any one. It is noticeable that these difficulties occurred with both men and women. . . . Few of them were

able to use more than a small part of their native intelligence and ability.

One of the most frequent tendencies was that of self-punishment. . . . So deeply ingrained and so powerful was this force that often the girl would permit nothing and nobody to interfere with its self-destructive progress. . . . All of these girls, unhappy and driven by unconscious needs, had blindly sought a way out of their emotional dilemma by having an out-of-wedlock child. . . . (11)

Another study of bewildered, struggling adolescents comes to the same conclusion:

All the girls showed effects of early emotional malnutrition; they received too little parental love, protection, esteem, encouragement, and liberation to develop adequate emotional security or inner controls and ideals in harmony with reality. (12)

These studies serve further to sharpen the focus of the group leader's job. While he cannot change the rejecting mother or the dominating father, he can be one adult in the youngster's life who can give him or her real security and the objective understanding which are the safeguards for sound personalities and the kind of behavior which we want for the child.

Less concern with dark corners or opportunities for trouble and more concern with the dark corners of personality are needed; less concern with surface behavior and more with psychological causes. No one can truly be protected from danger over any length of time, but he can be made so secure that he can protect himself. There will be fewer illegitimate pregnancies, fewer spontaneous elopements, fewer broken marriages, if leaders do a sound job in their clubs. When youngsters come to them with their confusions, whether they giggle or seem cynical, whether they seem good or bad, leaders should try to understand that their behavior as well as their confusion expresses feelings, and deal with the total personality, rather than, superficially and righteously, with the confusion from which they are suffering.

It will be to the credit of any group leader if he realizes that this job is sometimes too big for him and that he needs help from a specialist. The following chapter, therefore, is entirely devoted to the problem of how to get a young person to a specialist.

IN BRIEF

The group leader can make a good contribution by a better understanding of the adolescent's attempt to establish sound relationships with the other sex. A better understanding depends on the leader's freedom to discuss these problems in a nonjudicial and permissive way. It is well for leaders to avoid making decisions for youngsters and to realize that it is sometimes dangerous to give specific advice. Leaders can help them to clarify their feelings and admit that society does not have all the answers. In any discussion, the cultural and moral standards of the adolescent's family and community need to be taken into consideration. The leader can be helpful by showing how sex problems are common ones for everybody and seem to loom larger at the time of adolescence than before.

It is helpful to accept the adolescent's desire for sexual experiences as a natural thing but, at the same time, the consequences need to be pointed out, together with the fact that society does not permit such experiences. When youngsters have ignored what society taboos, it is very important for the leader to distinguish between disapproval of action and rejection of individual.

The leader should avoid creating more anxiety and guilt, and give warm assurance instead. The adolescent needs support at this time, particularly when he gets none from his family. The feeling and tone of a discussion needs to be permissive and the leader must choose the occasion on which such discussions are fruitful.

Youngsters often sense the leader's anxiety about sexual problems and express their normal aggression against adults by teasing them. The leader may become indignant or moralistic but this will not help. He needs to recognize this confusion. He has a right to refuse to answer questions if young people ~~overstep~~ the natural boundary between him as their leader and as a person who has his own private life.

When called upon to protect young girls or boys from actual physical danger resulting from premature experiences, the leader should concern himself even more with the youngsters' personality structures than the dark corners in which they might hide. Studies of unmarried mothers show that many had rejecting parents which warped their entire personalities. While the leader cannot change the rejecting parents, he may be the one adult in their lives who can give them security and real understanding. He cannot protect anyone from danger over any length of time, but he can help make him secure enough so that he can protect himself.

SUGGESTED READING

- Levine, Milton I., *The Wonder of Life*, Simon and Schuster, New York, 1940.
Schweinitz, Carl de, *Growing Up*, MacMillan Company, New York, 1938.
Williams, Frankwood E., *Adolescence*, Farrar & Reinhart, New York, 1930.

CHAPTER VI

Help Wanted

WE CAN'T DO IT ALL ALONE

THERE ISN'T A LEADER ANYWHERE who hasn't said at one time or another that he wished he had more time to give to some individuals in his group. Everyone is keenly aware of the need of certain members in his group for more individual attention than he can give. Fortunately, in many communities, there are individuals or agencies that are especially interested in working with individuals. There are even some very fortunate churches, settlements, schools, and other agencies that have such specialists on their staffs but this is probably the exception rather than the rule. More often than not, the job falls again on the group leaders' shoulders.

A busy salesman or housewife really cannot be expected to know all the special resources in his community. What he can do, if he is a group leader needing the help of a specialist, is to call the Council of Social Agencies and get the information. Some communities have very few services, which puts an extra burden on every worker and volunteer. In a way, it is unfair to the leaders. It is as if a community built a hospital without all the up-to-date equipment that medicine has developed. And, to make matters worse, the burden of interesting the people in more up-to-date special services like child guidance or casework or remedial teaching falls back on us. Many of us didn't bargain for that much trouble, and sometimes we get tired of it and quit. It might help a little to remember that there are quite a few national agencies set up to promote the need for more and better services. Some of us have called on them in the past and found them very helpful. You will find a number of such agencies, with exact addresses, listed at the end of the chapter.

But let us assume that a given community has some agency to work with individuals, say a Family Service Society. Although it is sometimes only a few blocks from the door of a

group leader's meeting place to the door of the case worker, the distance seems much greater and sometimes like a gulf, impossible to bridge.

You know how it is. I have been watching Billy for a long time and plan to talk with him after a meeting or a party and somehow never get around to it. There were others with him, or I was busy and had to run, and then one day I have the chance. Anyone who has been in this position knows that the leader is involved in a very difficult step.

HOW REFERRALS ARE MADE

This entire business of "referring" can be boiled down to a few basic steps.

1. The problem has to be recognized. That's usually not too difficult. Most of us know a problem when we see one. We see some boys who are always in trouble. They fight or sit by themselves, or they cry easily, or they show in other ways that they aren't very happy. Some leaders have found it helpful to start making notes about such boys fairly early. The notes eventually add up to a record which proves very useful in case of a referral. Description of behavior is more meaningful than general statements such as "shy," "withdrawn," "aggressive," "unco-operative." If, for instance, it is jotted down that "Billy walks up and down the room, jumps up from his chair every few minutes, runs out into the street and comes back with something he picked up in the garbage can"—it tells the case worker more than a cryptic statement, like "Billy is over-active."

Once notes have been made it helps to discuss them with someone else—the supervisor or the director—because at times conversations may lead to a decision to try this young person in a different group instead of making a referral. At other times, a discussion with an experienced and trained group worker, has helped to make a better referral.

2. If there is a Family Service Society, the simplest thing is just to call it up and tell about Billy. It is usually eager to be of help. One thing stumps many leaders: The family agency may ask, "What is the best way for Billy to get to us?" At this point many referrals fail because the group leader has

not prepared Billy for the referral or learned whether he is interested in getting help. The family agency quite frequently will write to Billy or his parents, offering an appointment which he often does not keep. He may come once or twice and then stay away. The effectiveness of the referral depends on the leader's ability to help Billy realize the need for special help. Therefore, the second step is to become acquainted with the available services and make sure that they are ready to help. The next and most important step is the referral interview with the boy or girl.

3. The referral interview determines the success or failure of the referral. It is a critical and often difficult thing to do well, and group leaders often feel that it is too delicate for them to handle.

The main points to be covered may be seen in the following paragraphs.

A case was being discussed among group leaders in a large settlement house. All the group leaders admitted their difficulty in carrying through a referral and wished to learn how to do it better.

THE CASE OF MARY

Mary, a fifteen-year-old Irish Catholic girl had come to the attention of the group leader through Nancy and Betsy, two other club members. The two girls had approached the leader and asked her to "talk to Mary." They were bothered by the fact that Mary carried on promiscuous sexual activities with eighteen-year-old boys.

The two girls had gone to the leader, wanting her to "straighten Mary out." The leader, a young woman, was frankly bewildered. She had no idea of how to deal with such a problem, yet she certainly wanted to help Mary. She thought of a number of approaches. One was to discuss sexual activities with all the girls in the club, without mentioning Mary's name. She discarded this because it seemed too obvious. Next she considered asking the two girls to send Mary to the supervisor, but she sensed that Mary would feel she was on the spot and probably not come. Finally she decided to talk to Mary directly. In the leader's meeting, however, she decided that Mary's behavior presented problems far beyond her competence as a

group leader. It seemed better to get the help of someone who would understand and treat the problems more skillfully.

As she described her possible approaches in the leader's discussion group, she happened to mention that Mary's mother had, on several occasions, locked the girl out of the house. Not until then did the leader think of the connection between possible love deprivation and the promiscuous sexual activities. One leader guessed that Mary might be so deprived and insecure as to feel the need to give everything she had to others in order to be accepted. The group leader was certain that it was her job to refer Mary to a case worker or a psychiatrist. The following questions had to be clarified in order to achieve this objective:

- How much help did Mary want?
- What was the best approach to Mary?
- How far should the leader go in the interview?

The leader knew that the first question had to be answered to make the referral possible. It is important to keep in mind that one can only refer people who want help. Some people prefer to endure a toothache rather than have the infected tooth treated. This is their privilege, of course, and the choice of whether to accept help or not must be left to them. There are reasons for people's resistance against help. Sometimes it can be overcome; at other times it is not possible to do so. Here, again, it is important to distinguish between our "need" to help a person and that person's need for help. As in all relationships where help is involved, one can go no further than the individual is ready to go. He can neither be pushed nor scared into accepting help. Unless the person accepts help voluntarily, the specialist is powerless. The medium which makes it possible to overcome resistance against help is a sound relationship with the referring party.

In the case of Mary and the group leader, the relationship was good. Since Mary felt accepted and comfortable with the leader, there was a good basis for the referral interview. The leader knew that part of her job in the referral interview would be to create a willingness to get help. She was quite aware of the necessity of leaving the choice to Mary and of avoiding undue pressure, in order to maintain the good relationship.

On the question of how to approach Mary, the seminar of leaders saw several possibilities. It was suggested that the leader talk to Mary after the club meeting; visit her at home; see her after school; write her a friendly note inviting her to come in.

The time used in discussing the best possible approach was well spent for Mary was important as a human being, and was entitled to the best thought the leaders could give. It was not considered wise to visit Mary at home, in view of the open conflict between her and her mother. It was further recognized that adolescents frequently resent being visited in their homes without being consulted about it first. One leader recalled how he had damaged his relationship to a group of boys by visiting their homes one evening to talk with their parents about some damage the boys had done in the neighborhood.

While several leaders favored an informal discussion after a club meeting this suggestion could not be carried out because it was learned that Mary's mother had not permitted her to be out of the house after seven o'clock for the last few weeks.

The suggestion of writing a short note inviting Mary to come and see the leader presented the same pitfalls as the home visit, since it was considered likely that Mary's mother would open the mail and either question Mary about it, or not give her the letter.

Finally it was agreed that the best thing was for the leader to visit Mary after school. In discussing the visit, one of the leaders suggested that she might say to Mary: "I just happened to pass your school." Leaders and parents are often under the impression that young people can be fooled in this way. While adults use all kinds of pretenses with the best intentions, they do not realize that it is absolutely essential that the relationship be clear and above board.

It would have been unwise for the leader to tell Mary that she "just happened to pass by." Aside from the fact that this would have been a most unusual coincidence, it avoids the purpose of the leader's visit: to help Mary accept a referral. The leader realized that it was better to come straight to the point and state in a simple and friendly way, the reason for her visit to school. She might say: "Mary, I came because I want to talk to you and you have not been at the club meeting lately"; or, noting Mary's natural surprise, "I'll bet you're sur-

prised to see me but this seems to be the only way for me to talk to you for a little while." Whatever the opening statement, the important thing would be to be direct and honest. While it was not possible for the leaders to foresee the discussion from this point on, the usual alternatives are not difficult to outline.

One is Mary's refusal to use help, which might be expressed in a number of ways. This possibility is the hardest for leaders to accept. Refusal to accept help does not necessarily represent failure on the leader's part. With the best relationship between leader and Mary, the most tactful and skillful approach, Mary might not be ready. It is important to keep in mind that such refusals indicate the degree of defenses which the individual has had to build up and, very often, the depth of the problem. In such cases, it is particularly necessary to maintain the sound relationship between leader and youngster and not to harm it by an impulsive reaction on the leader's part. It would be most unwise for the leader to say to Mary after she had refused help: "Well, don't blame me if you get into more trouble. I've certainly done my best to help you," or: "You certainly are ungrateful, Mary. I guess you are hopeless."

As a matter of fact, it would be well to expect a negative reaction and to give Mary the choice of discussing her problem with the leader. For example, the leader might, after the opening statement, say something like this: "I am concerned about you, Mary, because you have not been to our club meetings and a few of the girls have mentioned the trouble you had at home. Maybe you don't feel like talking about it with me, and I understand perfectly if that is so."

This gives Mary the chance, if she wishes it, to express resentment against the leader's attempt to help her. It is also a test of her interest in further discussion.

Mary might say: "I really have no trouble at home," or she might say that she can manage by herself. In these or similar ways she would reveal whether or not she wants help.

The leader's sensitivity to the undertones in Mary's answer will determine the next step. Mary might say no and mean yes. She might say yes and mean no. The leader will need all her insight, all her powers of observation, to know what Mary really wants.

It is probable that Mary really would welcome help but does not know how to get it. Very often she will express this inability in a most natural way—she will say nothing. If the leader has reached the point where Mary will tell of her problem, she needs her skill for the third step, the determination of how far to go. If she lets Mary pour out all her troubles, it will be difficult to get her to the specialist for treatment. Mary will say: "I don't want to talk to anybody else. I want to talk to you." The second danger is the possible accumulation of guilt on Mary's part. If Mary is really very troubled and has kept things to herself for a long time, she may pour out a good deal of intimate information about herself, motivated by the relief which confession affords. Afterwards, however, she may be ashamed of having "talked so much," and feel guilty over it, and resentful toward the leader.

Therefore, the leader needs to be aware of her objective as clearly as possible. Her objective is to refer Mary, not to treat her. It is important to get enough material to motivate Mary to admit the need for the referral, but no more. For example, as Mary describes her feelings about her mother, perhaps giving an inkling of her relationship to boys, perhaps indicating other things that trouble her, the leader may have to stop her from telling too much. She will have to ask herself, as Mary's story progresses: Is what she has told me enough to help her realize that she needs help? This point will be reached sooner or later, and the leader will not want to go further. She will try not to cut Mary off before she reaches it and yet not let her go beyond it.

Now follows the second test, when the leader will say: "I certainly see that you have troubles, Mary. What are you going to do about it?" The leader must be sure to put this in a positive way by adding: "I can see that you need some real help."

Again Mary's reaction, whether facial or verbal, will determine the next step. She may sigh or nod. She may shrug her shoulders or wave the question away. Inasmuch as Mary has passed the first test and indicated her desire for help by talking about herself, the leader may now encourage her to accept the help.

If Mary seems to be saying, in her way, that she could "use someone to talk to," it is necessary for the leader to make clear that she is not this person. She can tell Mary that her real respect for her and her difficulties has brought her to her but, at the same time, she will point out that she is not the best person to help her. She can now use all her adult persuasion to assure Mary that there are people especially trained to help young people like herself, and that her problem is not the only one of its kind. She will want to see Mary's reaction to her description of a case work agency, or child guidance clinic, and make it clear that she would gladly tell them of Mary's difficulties as she had described them to her.

If Mary seems interested enough to have the leader make an appointment, she can now go ahead and call the casework agency, describing the problem after Mary has given permission to do so. If it is possible for her to go with Mary and introduce her to the case worker, it will help a great deal.

AFTER THE REFERRAL

After this, the job of referral is over. From now on the leader is "only" the group leader with Mary one of its members. She will want to be careful not to single Mary out in club meetings just because she referred her for such services. She will be interested in hearing about the progress of the treatment from the casework agency and will keep such information confidential.

If Mary wants to tell the leader about her contact with the case worker, she will do so by herself. That is the time to listen to her without giving advice, but to encourage her to keep on taking her personal problems to the case worker. This has to be done without giving her the feeling that she is not interested, by referring again and again to the special skill of the other agency.

From here on the treatment is in the hands of the case worker who will know when to use other specialists. If the case workers have some understanding of the services that the leader can render, they will attempt to co-ordinate their treatment with the group approach, which is the leader's specialty.

IN BRIEF

Sometimes the leader needs the help of specialists. In such cases, he must know how to make a referral. He will acquaint himself with the agencies in the community equipped to give such services. Often this information can be gotten from the Council of Social Agencies.

Aside from the problem of resources, there remains the difficulty of getting a youngster to a specialist. Very often the results of such a referral hang on the following four steps:

1. Leader's recognition of problem.
2. What resources are available.
3. The referral interview:
 - a) Does the individual want to be referred?
 - b) How to approach him?
 - c) How far to go in interview?
 - Phase 1: opening.
 - Phase 2: presentation.
 - Phase 3: limitation and danger.
 - Phase 4: objective: referral.
 - Phase 5: interpretation of resources.
 - Phase 6: relationship must go on.

4. After the referral.

NAMES AND ADDRESSES OF AGENCIES

Community Chests and Councils, Inc. (Complete Directory of All Chests and Councils), 155 East 44 Street, New York 17, N. Y.
Family Welfare Association of America, 122 East 22 Street, New York, N. Y.
National Committee for Mental Hygiene, Inc., 1790 Broadway, New York 19, N. Y.
American Psychiatric Association, 9 Rockefeller Plaza, New York, N. Y.
American Red Cross Home Service, 315 Lexington Avenue, New York, N. Y.
Directory of Psychiatric Clinics and Related Facilities in the United States, 1944
National Committee for Mental Hygiene, 1790 Broadway, New York 19, N. Y.

We Talk Too Much

IN THE REFERRAL described in the previous chapter, the worker's activity consisted more of listening than of talking. The reason for this was her interest in finding out how to understand Mary in order to be of more help to her.

Many of us are so eager to be helpful that we talk too much and too soon, only to discover that what we have been saying has gone in one ear and out the other.

This tendency becomes clearer when we feel called upon to have "a good talk" with Johnny. He has done something wrong and we decide that what he needs is a spanking or a good talking to. The difference between the two is not very great. The physical pain is not usually important, what matters is the emotional hurt—the fear, humiliation, guilt. These effects are more fundamental, deeper reaching, and more damaging than a slap given in anger. The tongue lashing can do more harm than the old-fashioned spanking. Much has been said against physical punishment; perhaps the warnings should have stressed the danger to the nervous system as well as to the body. Today we look on people who use the strap as barbarians. While this is progress, the things we continue to do with our tongues are as cruel.

How does a typical talking-to interview look in slow-motion? This illustration is taken from a setting which is familiar to everybody—the school. Teachers and principals are more frequently called upon than most people to administer a talking-to. The school setting is incidental. Any other place would have done—the office of a head worker in a settlement house, a cabin in camp, a minister's office, or any place where an adult meets with a young person to make a point, teach a lesson, get across a message. Within schools, the scene of the interview varies, but usually it is not conducted in private. It may take place in the hall, the corner of a room, in the supervisor's office, or a classroom.

THE "TALKING-TO" INTERVIEW

The preparation for the interview consists of an order from a teacher to a child to "see the principal," or "go see Professor Jones." Sometimes the order is accompanied with a note which the pupil produces upon entering Mr. Jones' room. When he opens the door, he finds five other children waiting, some standing, some sitting. Mr. Jones is busy interviewing by his desk.

Mr. Jones, himself, wishes he didn't have to have an audience of five while he talks to one, but there are very few offices in the whole school. The moment he enters Mr. Jones' office, Jimmy joins the fraternity of bad boys. His attitude, long before the interview begins, is shaped by the atmosphere which he has entered. Before Mr. Jones has spoken his first word, we know that it will be difficult for him to get an understanding of Jimmy's problem, unless it is so obvious that it requires no discussion. Mr. Jones will have little chance to get beneath the surface. Jimmy will not say much under any circumstances.

Usually, he will have to wait. Some teachers believe that waiting is helpful. Sometimes they deliberately prolong the period of waiting, assuming this will give the individual a chance to think things over. This theory is based on the assumption that problems can be solved by an intellectual thought process, and that the tension built up during waiting is helpful to the thinking process.

Mr. Jones, who has already talked to half a dozen boys, is about ready to see Jimmy. He doesn't know him. He has seen him around, asked him once to straighten his tie before an assembly, or he has given him a praise card for his achievements in arithmetic. He sits behind his desk and motions to him. Jimmy approaches the desk with the teacher's slip in his hand. The slip may contain a "statement of facts." It may say that the boy has been late every day this week; that he always comes without books; disturbs other children; leaves the classroom; creates a disturbance. It may simply be a pass with the name of the boy, Mr. Jones' name, the date, and the hour. Occasionally the boy has no slip, in which case Mr. Jones will ask what he wants or why he came. This complicates the inter-

view considerably because the lad has not come voluntarily. Mr. Jones will have to spend a good deal of his valuable time in learning why Jimmy has come to him. Jimmy will probably say he has come for no reason at all—or, with a shrug, "I don't know."

If the problem is described on the teacher's slip, Mr. Jones will read it while Jimmy stands beside his desk. It is no accident that Mr. Jones usually does not ask Jimmy to sit down. This reflects Mr. Jones' philosophy that his talk to the young offender will have a deeper effect if Jimmy is kept on edge. The element of humiliation is recognized and considered valid because of the punitive effect which, in Mr. Jones' thinking, is healthy. Mr. Jones does not think it beneficial for Jimmy to be too relaxed. A certain amount of proper respect helps the interview.

After Mr. Jones reads the message on the slip, he looks at Jimmy searchingly and then back at the slip. This silent process is supposed to increase the tension and have a good effect on the interview. If the principal has a secretary he will now be able to open the wooden file-box on his desk and take out Jimmy's card. This will tell him at a glance Jimmy's marks in various subjects for the term, or even since the first grade. He may take the trouble to look at the back of the card where he will find Jimmy's address, his birth date, and some information about the language spoken in the home or how many brothers and sisters he has. Usually Mr. Jones does not have time to ponder over the meaning of the information because, in the meantime, three more boys have entered and must be seen.

The actual interview is now about to begin. Regardless of the way in which Mr. Jones speaks and the tone he uses, he begins the "talking-to" interview with a statement of the problem. He will say, for instance: You have been late all week, or I see that you are causing a lot of trouble in the classroom.

Depending on the school setting, his personality, or his relationship to the teacher who has sent Jimmy, Mr. Jones may add a sentence or two amplifying the problem somewhat or pointing it up in the desired direction. For example, he may add that he is astounded that Jimmy could show so little re-

spect as to create a disturbance. Relying on his memory or on a notation on Jimmy's file card he may tell Jimmy that he seems to have been sent for the same offense in the past.

The next step takes place in silence. It is Jimmy's reaction to step one. Depending on the severity of the incident, the manner in which Mr. Jones stated it, and Jimmy's own personality, his reaction will vary. However, the basic reaction will be a feeling of guilt. Everything up to this point has been calculated to create more feelings of guilt. The leaving of the classroom, walking down the hall, the explanation of where he was going to a teacher or monitor in the corridor, the knock on Mr. Jones' door, the entering of his office, the standing by the wall, the waiting with the others, the moment of coming up to Mr. Jones' desk—all these stages are calculated to create more sense of guilt. Mr. Jones' statement is only the last link in a heavy and burdensome chain which the school has put around Jimmy's neck. It was already weighty after Jimmy had created the disturbance that he regretted immediately afterward. Even with a perfectly normal, healthy youngster, the chain of guilt is heavy by the time Mr. Jones hooks on the last link. If it is too heavy Jimmy will need to throw it off in order to keep a balance within himself.

He has many ways of doing this. The more common one is to place the blame on others. Another equally common one is to throw the chain in the face of the one who has made it too heavy. He will have to become defensive or aggressive. Though he has not spoken, his reaction to the first step is quite definite and can be observed in his face or his body. He may stiffen slightly, or his face may turn slightly pale.

The third step belongs to Mr. Jones, who, known for his fairness and his liberal approach, will ask Jimmy for two things: He will ask him to tell his side of the story, and to give the reasons for his behavior.

He may say something like this: What happened? or: What have you got to say for yourself? or simply: Why did you jump and take the book away from the other boy? Again, depending on the individual factors, this third step will vary in form and degree, but not in kind. It will be the educator's request for the youngster to "speak up for himself."

Sometimes the third step is used to expound the philosophy

of the school. "This is a free country," Mr. Jones may say, "everyone has a right to speak his mind. I give everyone his chance to tell his side of the story. I am not saying the teacher is always right. I want you to tell me in your own words what happened. You are an intelligent boy, why did you do it?"

The fourth step is the renewal of Jimmy's reaction. Sometimes he doesn't speak but continues his silent defense. Whether he speaks or not, the fourth step has to be the extension of the second step, the expression of his reaction to the opening statement. He is basically concerned with the defenses necessary for his ego balance. Since he does not know the real reasons for his behavior, he cannot give them, even if he were not preoccupied with his guilt and his subsequent defense.

There is no fifth step, because there is nothing more to say but to repeat the previous steps or modify them in different variations. Mr. Jones usually repeats step number one, and states the problem more emphatically and pointedly. He will end up with a warning, a piece of advice, or a friendly pat on the back.

Johnny has been talked to. He hangs his head and walks toward the door as the next candidate approaches the desk.

Some will say that this is not typical of the school and this may be true. But it is typical of the talking-to interview, regardless of who conducts it, or where. Some, recognizing its weakness, will ask for constructive suggestions. We have none for this kind of interview. As long as we insist on giving advice, making a point, teaching a lesson without sufficient understanding, we have no suggestion that would show how to do it better.

For those interested in an interview that aims at understanding, we have another slow-motion picture.

This is a sample of the "listening-to" interview conducted by a mental hygiene worker. It may occur in any setting, but again we have chosen the school to show that in the same place two different approaches are possible. Both interviews take just a few minutes. This point is made because the representative of the talking-to method often claims that his is a less time-consuming method.

The difference between the first interview and the second is in the purpose, not in the time required. The aim here is not

to make a point, or to give advice, or to preach a sermon, but to understand the reasons for the behavior with which we are confronted.

THE "LISTENING-TO" INTERVIEW

No matter how crowded the building, the good youth leader will insist on a place where he can have as much privacy as possible. If there is no office available he may find the corner of the auditorium or sometimes talk outside, walking with the youngster, or sitting on a park bench. If this is prohibited by law, the interview may have to wait until the place can be found where he can talk alone with the boy or girl, rather than expose him to the experience of sharing his troubles with others who could use it against him later on. The most important reason why the leader will insist on privacy is the recognition that the chances for breaking through defenses are better if the youngster does not have also to be defensive about the place in which he finds himself.

Miss Smith, the visiting mental hygiene worker, has been permitted to use the assistant principal's office for her interviews. Her coming to the school once a week is an established routine and the teacher has given Jimmy the same slip, but has told him to see Miss Smith instead of Mr. Jones. The teacher has been troubled by Jimmy's behavior in the past. She has mentioned his name to Mr. Jones a few times in the lunchroom and once or twice has told Miss Smith that she would like to refer Jimmy to her.

When the teacher first mentioned Jimmy, Miss Smith asked for the boy's full name, jotting it down in her notebook. With it she also recorded briefly the teacher's casual complaint and the date on which it was made. Because she wants to be as well-prepared for the interview as possible, she has arranged her time in such a way that whenever possible, children are sent by appointment. Some teachers have criticized this procedure as being too formal, but have accepted Miss Smith's explanation that the appointment method gives her the chance of having as much information available for the interview as possible. She will, if possible, look up the record card, check on brothers and sisters in the same school and, if at all feasible, spend a few minutes with Jimmy's other teachers to get a fuller

picture before she sees him. If she is connected with a social agency, she will try to "clear the case." This routine procedure is an attempt to obtain, from a central index in the community, information about any other agency which might have had contact with Jimmy or his family. She may get valuable help from a hospital, Department of Public Welfare, perhaps a court, or the police. Since this is not always possible, we shall assume that she has to see Jimmy "cold," without any previous information and without appointment. She is in the assistant principal's office and does not know that Jimmy is coming. She has never seen him and knows nothing about his background.

As Jimmy knocks on the door, Miss Smith clears her desk. She wants to show that she is not preoccupied with any other work at this moment but is here for Jimmy alone. She does not call "come in" but will probably go to the door and open it. She will have her own way of helping Jimmy to relax as he comes in. She may smile or greet him in a warm and friendly way. She may walk with him to her desk and offer him a chair. Perhaps she has taken the slip from him as he came in and looked for his name. She will call him Jimmy rather than Green because the lad will be more comfortable if called by the first name, since this is what his friends and parents call him. She may say: Won't you sit down, Jimmy. Perhaps she will comment on the heavy rain today as she herself sits down, or refer casually to the nice play that was given this morning in the auditorium.

What she does is aimed at creating as free and as relaxed an atmosphere as possible, since she is aware of the strain under which Jimmy has been ever since he disturbed the classroom. She knows that it is not easy for him to leave his group and be sent to somebody whom he hardly knows. He may be seeing Miss Smith for the first time in his life, just as he saw Mr. Jones whom he knew only by sight.

The purpose of the first step is to help Jimmy tell of his feelings about the incident for which he has been sent. Since Miss Smith realizes that Jimmy does not know her, she will introduce herself, and perhaps in a sentence explain what she does. She will leave the slip on the side of the desk and ask Jimmy what brought him here. She will do this in such a way that the boy will find it not too difficult to talk. Perhaps she

will say in a friendly, quiet voice: What's the trouble, Jimmy? She will try to avoid a question that automatically puts Jimmy on the defensive or implies that he has done something wrong. Maybe she will ask: Would you like to tell me what happened in class this morning? She will try to find the words and the tone that will make it easy for him to tell her what happened.

As in Mr. Jones' interview, the first step is decisive and determines the other steps. In the second step Jimmy will give a picture of his feelings by the way in which he describes the incident. Miss Smith will listen and watch very carefully because Jimmy's face, voice, and description of the problem, will give her valuable clues toward understanding him. He may say nothing. He may sit on the edge of the chair, his head lowered, his hands in his lap, picking his nails. This will tell Miss Smith something about Jimmy. It will tell her how tense and frightened the youngster is, how difficult it is for him to speak, and how far away he must be from the comparatively relaxed stage which she had hoped to reach with her first step.

More often Jimmy will say something. He may say: The teacher is always picking on me. He may say that nothing happened, except that he always seems to get the blame "for nothing." He may even place the blame on some other pupil. He may express his confusion about himself by saying: Something must be wrong with me. I get into trouble all the time.

Whatever he says, whether in words or in action, Miss Smith will be getting her first clue toward an understanding of Jimmy. While her activity during the second step is confined to intensive listening, known as "diagnostic listening and watching," the third step is aimed at following the hints which Jimmy has given her in the second step. She will need all her skills and sound instincts in order to pick the right lead out of the clues that Jimmy has given her. Since we assumed that Miss Smith is seeing Jimmy "cold" she has to rely heavily on her first impressions and therefore will move very carefully in her third step. Where she has been able to get some background information about Jimmy and his family, she can be more sure of her ground.

Miss Smith will observe everything possible, because she has to rely on impressions rather than on facts. Jimmy may be a very small, delicate youngster. His nails might be bitten off.

His clothes will tell something about him and his family. He may be much too carefully groomed for a boy of his age; his clothes may be neglected. He may be extremely shy and timid; he may be aggressive and brusque in his manner. She will observe the way he walks. It may be a slow, hesitant shuffle, or he may stalk in with determination.

Let us assume that he is extremely tall and broad for his age, competent in the way in which he describes the incident, and apparently resentful at having been sent in.

Miss Smith will sense that Jimmy feels out of step with his class. The fact that he is taller and broader than the average boy of his age will tell her that Jimmy may feel misplaced. She guesses that he thinks of his classmates as babies. He perhaps resents being treated like a fourteen-year-old and would prefer having a job rather than being in school at all. The detached manner in which he has handed the yellow slip to Miss Smith is his way of saying: I have this silly piece of paper from my teacher. I am supposed to give it to you but it doesn't mean a thing to me. He began his description in step two by waving the whole incident off with one hand and saying: Oh, it's really nothing.

All the observations in steps one and two determine Miss Smith's approach in step three. If she has some evidence of Jimmy's feeling out of place, being too large for his class, wishing he were out of school and at work, being unconcerned about the incident that brought him here, she will not pursue the incident itself, but attempt to substantiate her impressions and relate cause to effect in step three. ✓

She may say: You seem to have quite a time in your class. Or, if she is more sure of herself, she may try a more direct approach by asking whether he is really interested in school or whether he is getting much out of it. She may now follow up Jimmy's statement in step two and carry it through a bit further. For instance: Jimmy, you say that nothing really happened but that little things annoy you and the group. Maybe it's the wrong group. Or, perhaps, your mind is on something that is more important to you than school right now.

Whatever words she chooses to use, the purpose will be to lead Jimmy into the area of his real problems. She may try to

help him express his feelings further so that she can understand better and help. The fourth step will tell the story of how skillful her observation and handling have been.

If we assume, for the purpose of illustration, that she has given Jimmy the opportunity to talk about himself she may be able to bring his real problem out in the open. If he doesn't feel threatened, if he has not been made to feel guilty, then he will find it possible to say very meaningful things in this fourth step. He may tell something of his family's economic situation. Perhaps his mother needs more money. Maybe he is not old enough to get working papers. Maybe he already has a job without working papers and comes to school tired and irritable. Perhaps some of his friends are working while he hasn't found a job. Maybe he has dropped back a grade in school and resents being with smaller boys day after day. Whatever he says in step four will throw some light on the behavior which had originally brought him to Miss Smith.

He may bring out some very personal material in the fourth step. Perhaps he is worried about illness at home. Perhaps his parents quarrel in his presence. There may be a serious economic problem. He may say no more than: To tell you the truth, I am not thinking much about school. This in itself would be a lead toward understanding.

For the purpose of illustration let us assume that Jimmy admits that he is tired of being in a class of smaller boys. If he were placed in 8-B where many of his friends are, he is sure he might get along much better. The fifth step would be a quick decision on the part of Miss Smith about the next move in Jimmy's case. She may tell him that she would like to discuss the situation further with the teacher or the principal and see whether arrangements for a different placement can be made, either now or later.

Assuming that Miss Smith, like Mr. Jones, has only a few minutes to give to Jimmy, she will not try to go farther. She has achieved the purpose of her brief interview: to get a somewhat better understanding of the behavior which caused the boy to be sent to her. She sees Jimmy to the door, encouraging him to come back if anything troubles him, and assuring him of her continued interest.

TWO INTERVIEWS COMPARED

The two interviews may now be compared. In this summary Mr. Jones and Miss Smith are called the "interviewers" and Jimmy the "client."

Opening

(1st & 2nd Step)

THE "TALKING-TO" INTERVIEW	THE "LISTENING-TO" INTERVIEW
<i>Interviewer:</i> States problem factually	<i>Interviewer:</i> Helps youngster to be at ease and opens way for him to discuss problem
<i>Youngster:</i> Latent guilt is further aroused	<i>Youngster:</i> Has no need to be defensive. Expresses some feelings

Central Issue

(3rd & 4th Steps)

<i>Interviewer:</i> Requests explanation of action	<i>Interviewer:</i> Attempts to diagnose cause by following youngster's lead and focusing on areas that help toward further understanding
<i>Youngster:</i> Verbalizes guilt in defensive answer	<i>Youngster:</i> Not having been threatened or made guilty, defines problems and relates himself to interviewer

The school lends itself well to an illustration of the main point of this chapter: that understanding comes before talking. In reality, the leader of voluntary groups is in a more favorable position than is the teacher. There are at least four factors which distinguish the teacher from a group leader.

1. The nonvoluntary character of her group. This is important if we consider the group climate and the possibility of diagnostic information.
2. The pressures for satisfactory performance by the administrative and supervisory body.
3. The curriculum (with need for coverage and tests).
4. The restrictions in arbitrary temporal limits, i.e., semesters, examinations.

THE GROUP LEADER'S OPPORTUNITY

The group leader has a voluntary group with much less pressure for performance, little prescribed program, and less rigid time limitations. This difference makes it possible for him (or her) to choose the time and place for an interview. He can use the group itself as the most effective device with which to help the individual. While the teacher usually has to keep the members assigned to her room, the club leader can use her judgment when it comes to placing a youngster in another club. The teacher often finds herself conducting interviews after rules have been broken. The club leader does not have to watch regulations and rules but can concern herself more with the way in which children act toward one another.

For example: Truancy is a typical topic in school interviews. The same problem in a group can be discussed, not in terms of lawbreaking, but in terms of relationship to other members of the group. Therefore, the club leader can come right down to the human conflict involved while the teacher usually has to begin talking about the law.

Only if the group leader insists on discussing an issue while it is "hot" will he find himself using the talking-to method. For example, think of the boy who refused to give up the ball in the auditorium after the chandelier was hit (Chapter II, page 29). If the leader were to attempt an interview with the youngster on the auditorium floor immediately after the accident he would probably have had to use the talking-to method. The results would have been the same as those that followed Mr. Jones' talk with Jimmy.

Therefore, the timing of an interview is particularly important. It is difficult because he seems to have such a wide choice. Should he see him immediately after the incident occurred? Should he wait a few days, or even weeks, or even better: shouldn't he know the lad well enough to talk with him long before "trouble" happens?

When the leader is in a position to give even a little time to the individuals in his group, it is possible to conduct helpful interviews by keeping in mind the principles outlined in this chapter. They can be very brief and very thoughtful, particularly where the leader has been helped to keep records of the

individuals and movements of the group. Because records have been found to be of great help to some leaders, the following chapter offers suggestions on the writing of records.

IN BRIEF

In dealing with young people, adults frequently talk too much and listen too little. A tongue lashing can be more harmful than physical punishment. The adult who hopes to make a point often forgets that he needs to understand a person and his feelings before he can have an effect on his thinking. The method called the "talking-to" interview is based on the premise that a point can be made by an intellectual verbalization of an already known principle.

In the talking-to interview, the adult begins by making a factual statement of the problem. This produces a negative reaction. It arouses usually further guilt, making it necessary to be defensive. The adult does not always recognize this reaction because it is not visible and instead continues his talk by requesting an explanation of the act. This calls for an expression of the guilt and the defensive attitude built up during the interview. In reality, in the talking-to interview, the adult and the youngster talk past each other and never come to grips with the real issue.

The other possibility is to aim at understanding rather than at making a point. For this purpose the "listening-to" interview begins with the adult's attempts to help the youngster to be at ease and opens the way for him to express his troubles. To this the young person can react directly by verbalizing his feelings, perhaps blaming it on others, but always giving the interviewer material about himself. The adult will now try to get closer to the point of real trouble in order to get further help toward understanding. Once the youngster feels accepted and understood, he will give the adult some definite leads as to areas and methods with which he can be helped.

It is the group leader's job to understand individuals in his group. He must be given some time in which to talk with them alone. Where the interview can be informal, the principle of listening for understanding, rather than talking to make a point, is suggested.

What Price Recording?

TO MANY LEADERS records are a nuisance. Some do not have the time to make notes; others do not see the purpose of writing everything down that happened in a group meeting; and again, others say that nobody reads what they write anyway, so why write it?

There is no question that these are good arguments. It can readily be admitted that too much writing is done and not enough doing, or, as one leader put it: We are erecting paper walls between ourselves and the people whom we serve.

SOME RECORDS ARE USEFUL, SOME AREN'T

There should be a rule that only those people be asked to keep records who see a purpose in them. Harassed leaders are often found huddled in a corner at closing time, jotting down the activities of their groups because somebody asked them to "keep records." Most of the time leaders have no place to write, because there are not enough desks or offices or light, and often no time allowed in their schedule in which to write.

Those who out of a sense of duty or orderliness keep some kind of records, commonly describe the activities of their club. They write something like this:

11/5/46--The group met at the regular time and voted on the money to be spent for their Christmas party. They played ping-pong and visited the "Leopards" for some dancing. They decided to go swimming next week. Dues were collected and one new member was voted into the club.

This kind of report does not need to be written. If it has meaning to the group, the secretary might well take care of this chore.

If we agree that activities are means to an end, recording of them is useful only if they show how the leader is able to relate ends and means. That the group played ping-pong is not important by itself, or that they voted in one new member.

If leaders are asked to keep records of this kind, it seems clear enough why they consider it a nuisance. Who can blame them if they say: What difference does it make what the club did that night as long as they had a good time?

If the leader knows what he is after in his group and how he is going about accomplishing his aim, his notations become more meaningful and show the growing insight into himself, each individual member of his club, and the interactions between himself and the whole group. Only if the leader is interested in checking his own activity with the group will a record have meaning to him. e.

We are not speaking here of the statistical records which are kept in many organizations and which measure quantity rather than quality. Statistical facts are meaningful when it comes to fund raising, and for that purpose have their place. We are concerned here with the degree to which the leader can individualize the members of his group, and observe his own growing understanding of their behavior. As long as he is satisfied with the hit-and-miss method, with his own impressions and visitors' encouragements, there is no need to keep records.

If records are not written for the leader's own use, they should not be kept. A leader may have difficulty writing anything down; one may even dislike writing letters. If a leader hands in a report only, out of a sense of loyalty, it will mean very little to others because it means little to him. One gets exactly as much out of a record as he puts into it.

Just as one cannot define the objectives of his group and his own activity without clarifying the function of the whole agency, so one cannot develop standards in recording without having those standards set by the agency.

It takes time to write things down, particularly if one is selective in what he writes. If an agency is interested in records, it will have to give the leaders time to write them. They will need opportunity to concentrate, which means a quiet place. In addition, it may mean stenographic help, because records, to have value, should be kept in such form that it is possible to look back at them after a period of time. It means a folder for the records of each group; it means a file where they can be kept, because if they are worthwhile they will be full of confidential information.

It is plain, then, that facilities must be provided if adequate group records are to be kept. If the community, board, or administration is not ready to provide them, the leader will not be in position to keep records. Many leaders have struggled for standards in record-keeping when the agency or community was not ready for them. If they throw up their hands and say, What's the use? Who can blame them?

A SAMPLE RECORD—THE "TOMMIES"

A few samples will illustrate ways in which records can be used.

The following is a leader's account of how he helped a new member feel at home on his first visit to the group:

Report of meeting of the Tommies, evening of January 23, 1945: Eddie Z., fifteen, was introduced to me by Mr. B. as a prospective member of the Tommies. Since none of the group had arrived as yet, I took the occasion to acquaint Eddie with the activities of the club and also to find out something about the boy. Eddie lives on Twenty-sixth Street (the Tommies' neighborhood). He has two older sisters, one married, the other working, and a younger brother. He expressed an interest in mechanics. When I asked what phase of mechanics he was interested in, he said that he hadn't "decided," but he liked to put things together. He also informed me that when the radio in his home had been broken, he had fixed it. He is a student at P.S. X and in the sixth grade. Although this would indicate a retarded mentality, I observed nothing during the evening that would justify such a conclusion. The boy mentioned that he had lived in an "institute" for several years. However, he did not state the nature of the place and I did not question him about it. I took Eddie into the Tommies' room, explained the origin of the pictures on the walls, and told him that the boys were in the process of painting tables and would welcome his help. While we were waiting for the others to come we played several games of tic-tac-toe and another game, suggested by the boy, which involved the connection of dots by lines, in which the winner is that player who completes the greatest number of squares. In both games the boy displayed ability to concentrate and think ahead. We tied in the number of games won.

Eddie and I were going down to the lobby when M. and J. came up. I introduced Eddie to them. M. accepted him immediately but J. appeared resentful and expressed reluctance by moving away from the two. I led all three into their room and told them to get acquainted while I went down to return some keys. When

I returned I found all three discussing something warmly and Eddie greeted me with a question that concerned the discussion. The boy seemed to have been accepted by both M. and J. now and was establishing himself. We couldn't paint tables because M. had been unable to purchase the paint. I therefore suggested that we use the shop. The boys agreed and we all descended to the shop.

We found Mr. C. in the shop and he explained the plans of a project he was working on—inviting any of the boys to join him if they wished to help. Both M. and J. expressed a desire to continue on what they had started several weeks ago. But neither of them did. M., after getting Mr. C. to set up and demonstrate the operation of the lathe, spent the rest of the evening at it, turning a shape of wood. J. was lost for a time trying to decide what to make. He finally began work on a birdhouse sign. This, he claimed, could be hung outside the door of our meeting room to announce that the Tommies were at home. Eddie was busy helping Mr. C. During the evening a younger group entered the shop and I jokingly announced that "the Tommies are at work here." In the exchange of words that followed between the two groups M. said, "the Tommies, the only club that hasn't won a single game yet," to which Eddie added, "the club that isn't going to lose a game from now on." He didn't say this loud enough for anyone but myself to hear it.

After they had cleaned up the shavings of their work, the boys agreed to meet at 7:45 on Thursday for a swimming party at the Seaman's Y.M.C.A.

Such recording helps the supervisor to discuss the activity in detail with the leader. The supervisor of this worker might wish to discuss with the leader his deduction in regard to Eddie's mental development which he had made on rather slim grounds. He might comment on the leader's having left Eddie and the two boys to their own devices while he went down to get the key, using the opportunity to tell the leader that this had been a very helpful move on his part and perhaps suggesting that it facilitated Eddie's getting acquainted. Such a conversation between supervisor and leader may encourage the leader to use the same device in a similar situation, perhaps leaving the room under some pretense even if he does not need a key. There are other teaching suggestions in this record. It contains information about the boy which the leader should remember. While the bit of knowledge that the leader gained

does not tell much about Eddie, it can be used as a basis for a follow-up if desired. The way in which Eddie takes pride in the club at the end of the meeting, opposing one of the older boys, shows that the leader has succeeded in making his entry into the club as satisfying as possible.

ANOTHER EXAMPLE OF GOOD RECORD-KEEPING

Another record illustrates the development of a club of eight boys between thirteen and fifteen years of age who had started the year with a new leader. The leader, a veteran with a great love for youngsters and a great respect for people, felt that a detailed record would make it possible for his supervisor to help him from day to day. At the end of the year, the club record was summarized. This is a condensed version of the summary:

The Dukes began meeting in January, 1945. During the five and one-half months of meeting three times a week, six members carried on consistently. They all lived between Elm and Maple Avenues on Twenty-first Street. The first meeting started by leader's attempt to make a boat but interest was not sustained and meeting degenerated into a general rough-house. Between this and the next meeting L. prepared a variety of activities such as pottery, ship-building, ping-pong, and basketball. Since club still showed little response L. tries dancing and pool for the third meeting. He is keenly aware of the need to keep up attendance, at the same time attempting to stimulate the members to more constructive activities. The problem of the leader's need to become accepted by the group is clearly reported. He finds that the more carefully a meeting has been planned the more successfully the evening went. Attendance at the following meeting was always directly correlated to the amount of planning the leader had done at the previous one. At the seventh meeting the leader, who has remained fairly passive in the group, suggests a club paper and uses it as a means of communication with the group, more effective than the spoken word. This was necessary because until this time the leader had not succeeded in sitting down with the boys for more than five minutes in one room.

[The record now begins to show descriptions of individuals. . .]

Further individualization is made possible as the boys learned to express themselves, even if very briefly, in their one-page typed club paper. Joint swimming trips, as well as occasional visits to the leader's house gradually cement the relationship between leader

and group more firmly. When the club, without consulting the leader, "kicks out" one new member, the leader has now a strong enough relationship to reopen the discussion of this incident with the result that the new boy is taken back into the club.

The boys, in order to test "how far they can go with the leader," attempt to force him to go on an overnight hike early in April. Again the leader is able to discuss this without getting the tremendous hostility he had found in the beginning to any kind of joint discussion. A compromise for a whole day hike is made which was successful.

Parallel with the development of a better relationship between group and leader goes a gradual moving away from physical activities, which had been the one and only interest of the boys for the first eight weeks in the club. Trips and discussion of social topics began to take the place of the once typical "basketball-playing club."

However, the development did not proceed in one straight upward curve but had periods of regression as well. The leader still finds that attendance drops after there has been any difficulty at a meeting and on occasions the boys seemed perfectly willing to give up their leader. When the leader takes the group to regular broadcasts he finds himself up against the problem of testing the relative adjustment of his groups in a larger environment not as tolerant as the agency.

By the end of May, the club is able to meet to plan for activities jointly, to be aware of certain standards, and to look back with considerable pride on their newspaper.

This kind of summary shows better than any discussion what the leader accomplished. It could not have been written without the detailed record in which the leader described his own as well as his club's problems. Throughout the year, the record had been used for self-supervision by the leader who had made it a practice to read the entry of the last meeting before he went into the next one.

HOW THE RECORD HELPED THE LEADER TO HELP WALTER

The same record illustrates also the development of individuals. At the end of the year, the leader was interested in getting evidence of how much individuals had been helped, over and above the development of the whole group. He went through the record, underlining the name of Walter with red pencil whenever the name appeared. He then picked out all references

to Walter and wrote one brief paragraph of the development of one member of the "Dukes."

Walter is, at first, the hardest to handle. He is interested in basketball and he plays well. But he is also eager to know of the leader's life. He had followers and is a possible club president. He is not as strong as a couple of other boys in the club but he is smart. Walter is one of the two who writes the first time for the club paper. When an editor is needed he wants to take the job, promises to work. He sits down right away and writes about a visiting football player, interviewing him later on. (Height, weight, age, color of hair, and eyes, shoe number.) That same night, when the leader cleans the club room, Walter helps him. During the hike Walter wants to carry the leader's knapsack. /

Once, after a meeting, Walter makes a speech to the other members of the club and the leader. He talks about women, who, in his opinion, in this country, are very unselfish. "The women are very nice creatures but they are putting up with a lot of gaff from their children." On another occasion he talks about the war, in a way and tone which possibly show he wants to identify himself with President Roosevelt. /

Now the paper is written almost entirely by the club members. But Walter, the editor, is not satisfied. He writes: "The paper needs more stories and we need everybody in the club to write once a week. It is no good to write one week and not the other like some guys." In the same number, he welcomes a candidate for the club: "Fellow members of the club: We have a new pupil. His name is Sam. He is John's brother. We hope he is a nice guy and a good citizen." In the last number of the spring, Walter writes about his work in the shop, illustrating the story with a linoleum cut: "I started a rabbit Tuesday, last week, for my little brother and I kept working until I had the wheels and the axle fixed. I am going to paint it at home. I hope it is going to be good."

A week after the death of President Roosevelt, Walter has his picture in his pocket. But he also seconds an anti-Semitic and anti-Negro remark made by another boy.

Walter attends the meetings more and more regularly, hardly missing a single one. Toward the end his interest in basketball diminishes. On one occasion he doesn't want to go to the gym at all. Once, when plans to go swimming don't work out and all the other boys go home, Walter follows the leader to the House where he hammers out a picture of a ship in a copper plate mounting it on a piece of wood. Underneath he writes "Dukes."

On the basis of this record the leader succeeded in getting Walter to a child guidance clinic. Here he reported regularly while continuing his membership in the "Dukes."

We do not need to stress the significance of a well-kept record in case of a referral to a case work agency. The problems involved in such referrals have been mentioned in the chapter "Help Wanted." We need to point out again that referrals often fail because of the lack of records kept over a period of time.

HOW RECORDS HELP

These excerpts from records are not intended to be samples of good recording, nor do we mean to suggest that the form chosen is necessarily better than any other. We are concerned here with showing that records can be useful in the attempt to help groups and individuals. If one sees a person regularly over a period of time, he is not always aware of his growth. One notes with surprise the growth in a child whom he has not seen for several years—the tremendous change in her appearance, her manner, and her way of thinking. Her parents, living with her day by day, will be interested in the observation but may not quite be able to accept it, because they lack perspective. The group leader is more like the parent than the occasional visitor. Changes which are taking place are not realized. A good group record provides the perspective for the backward look. ✓

At the same time it is a mirror of the leader, particularly if he is candid in describing himself and his activity in the record. ✓ He may find it difficult to record certain things said or done, because, by the time he sits down to write, he may feel differently about them and perhaps would rather forget them. While forgetting may seem easier at the moment, it will not prevent the leader from making the same mistake again. Whenever he succeeds in getting himself to record them and reflecting on them afterwards, he gains in awareness of himself and his role in the group process. It is another way of finding out what he is doing in the club, and where he is going. ✓

Any leader, just as anyone else, is subject to moods and will feel differently about his club or individuals in it at different times. ✓ The record can be a stabilizing factor in guiding him through times when he is discouraged about himself or his group. When he looks back and says: "What have I been doing all these months with the children?" he remembers epi-

sodes, flashes, instances. The record, like a good photograph, shows him more objectively what he did and whether or not it helped anyone.

While some agencies ask their workers to keep records, there is a real question about the value of such material without the stimulus of a good supervisor to help with the recording. But even with that help, it is still the leader who has to do it. If one's own activities do not appear in the record it loses much of the real value it can have. If we record unrealistically by eliminating our mistakes, we are helping no one.

HOW TO MAKE USEFUL RECORDS

Conscientious leaders have said: I can't possibly write down all my impressions during a club meeting or all the things the youngsters say or do. Likewise it is impossible to record all activities throughout a club meeting. This is a valid point. Many records are much too long. It is possible to state a few principles which will help.

1. Record what is important to you. This will depend on your own objectives and insight into yourself and your club. Many a leader never thinks about objectives until he begins the record. His thinking may go something like this: All right, it is a good idea to keep a record. I will try it and see whether it helps. How do I start to write up today's club meeting?

He thinks back to who came in first, how they sat around, what they said, how he asked them to listen to the music, how two youngsters came in late, how he was wondering whether to stop Jimmy from giving Eddie a hot-foot, how Bill leaned out of the window a little bit too far for the leader to be comfortable, how Mac began to carve his name on the club table, how they all decided to run a raffle for their basketball uniforms. The more he thinks, the more things come to his mind. The mere idea of writing all this down is appalling. It looks as though it may take about four hours to write down a one-hour club meeting. One can't possibly do this. There isn't time and not all is important. So he will have to leave something out.

2. Pick out different things at different times. In one meeting you may find that the way boys co-operated was in contrast to

the week before, when everyone thought only of himself. You may describe the activity that shows their co-operation most vividly. Probably you will pick one or two members who stood out in one way or another. You may feel that Billy, of whom you know a good deal by now, seems to be much more restless than when you wrote about him two months ago. You may have noticed how he picks up everything Donald says. In looking back over the records you realize that something is going on between those two that you did not observe while supervising the ping-pong tournament. You may decide to watch their development a little more and record it more carefully for a few weeks, without losing track of the development of the whole group. Your way of recording will change as you become clearer about your purposes and can therefore be more selective.

3. *No two people record alike and the form and content of their records should be as different as their handwriting. Develop your own style.* You do not have to be a writer to do so. The purpose is not to tell a story or to make a point but to record what you and your group have done as intimately and as selectively as possible.

There is no longer any question but that recording sharpens the focus of our work; the mere fact that one sits down and gives some thought to the purposes of his activity proves this. It is also an established fact that insight grows and the quality of performance is raised if we find that recording is useful.

Discussions of records in a group of leaders can be helpful, particularly if the group is led by someone who is accepted as an authority by the group.

IN BRIEF

Records kept to satisfy someone else are useless. Some records describe activities rather than movement and could be kept by one of the members. If the leader is clear about his purposes and the fact that program is a means and not an end, his notations will become more meaningful as his insight grows. Only if the leader is interested in checking his own activities with the group will a record be useful to him. Records should be written for the leader's own use.

If an agency is interested in meaningful records, it will have to allow time for it in the worker's total schedule. Besides time, it

means a quiet place to write, some stenographic help, as well as a folder and a file. The leader alone cannot set such standards without the help of his agency.

If observations of behavior are recorded, the leader will have an objective check on his work by comparing stages of development as portrayed in the record. His technique of accepting new members, for example, can be discussed with his supervisor who usually is not present at club meetings.

A summary of a record kept over a whole season shows the accomplishments objectively. Such a summary can also be used to explain to outsiders, friends, or contributors what the agency is actually doing and accomplishing.

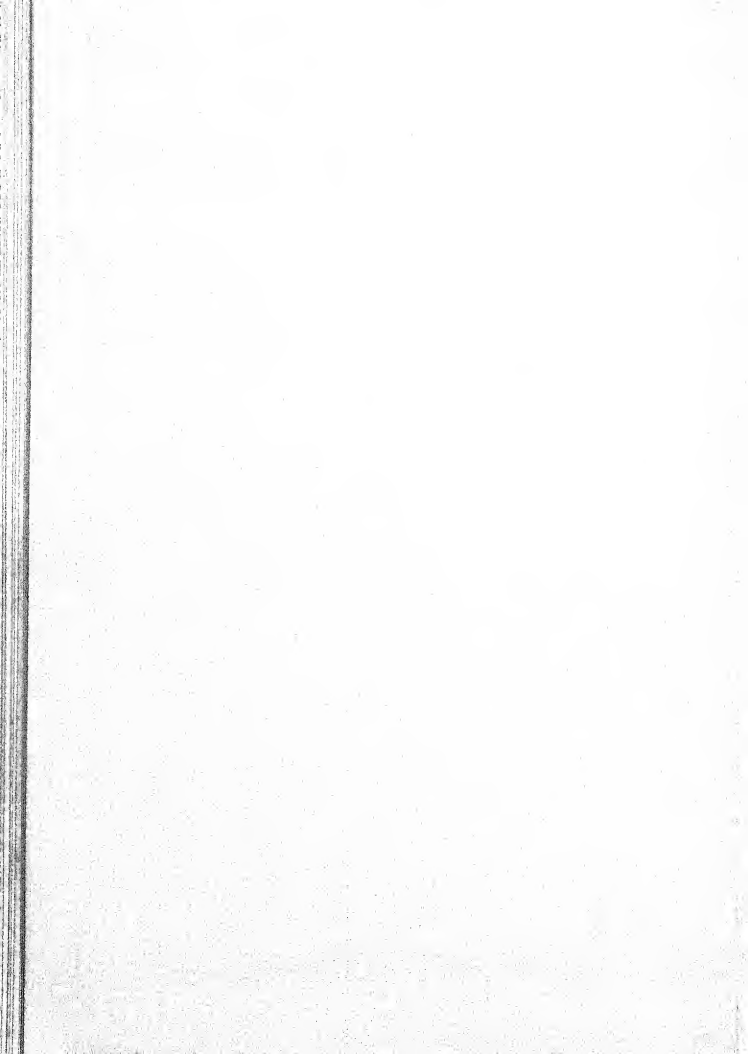
It is possible to trace the growth of several individuals through a period of time by picking out their particular names from a group record and putting them together.

This is most significant if a leader wishes to refer one person for more individual attention. Often referrals fail because no record has been kept.

It is necessary to be selective and record only what seems important to the leader. There are no general rules possible because the form and content of a record will be as different as people's handwriting. To compare records of different clubs often broadens the scope and insight of the individual leader.

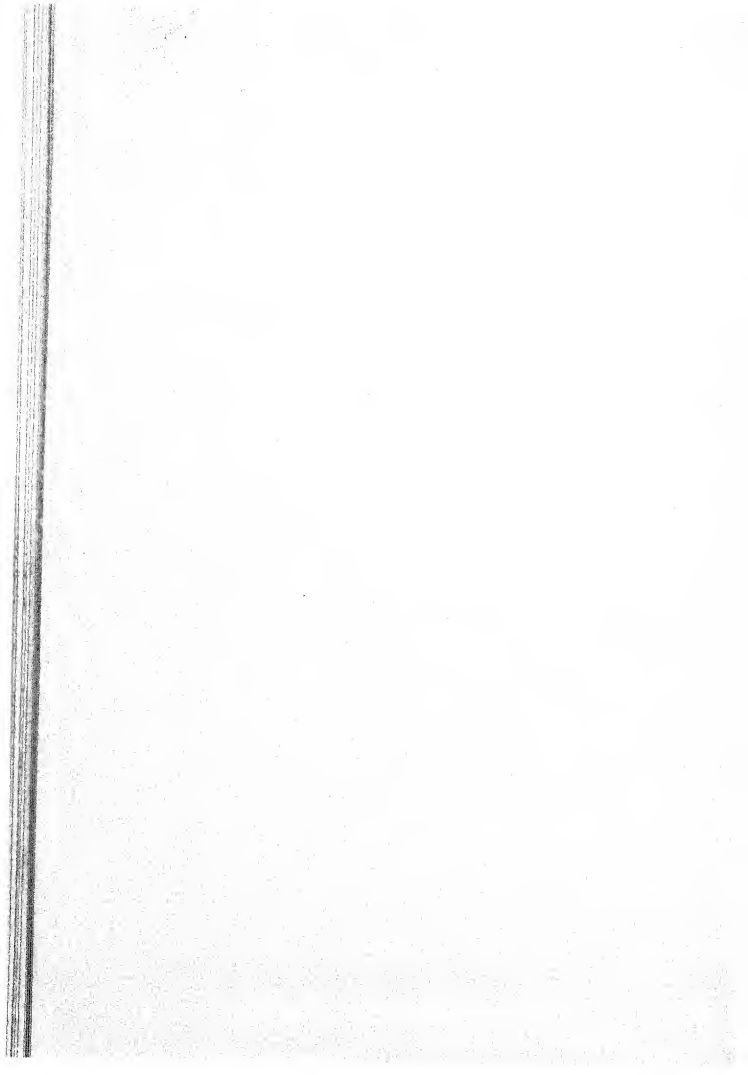
SUGGESTED READING

Kaiser, Clara, "Record Keeping in Group Work," *New Trends in Group Work*, Association Press, New York, 1937.



III

"Meeting Grounds" Between Leader and Group



"Keep 'em Off the Street"

IN THIS SECTION, we shall look at the settings in which leaders and groups meet. The agencies and organizations interested in group work differ widely and we cannot hope to give an adequate picture of all. Mr. Jones, a board member of a settlement house, expressed the generally accepted notion of the purpose of this type of agency by saying: "We are trying to keep the youngsters off the street."

Mr. Jones was recently shocked into the necessity for a better definition of what they were trying to do when, after a board meeting, a group of boys, unaware of the visitors downstairs, threw some furniture out of the window of the third floor. He asked with considerable feeling what the whole place was for, if it could not keep its members under control. He had to admit that they were "off the streets" but that apparently was not enough. The leaders assured the board that they had done all they could to prevent such behavior. They admitted failure and felt inadequate. Several volunteers resigned.

Upon investigation, it was found that the group that had thrown the furniture consisted of fourteen boys between twelve and sixteen years of age. They had come to the House for many years and felt that the one dollar a year membership contribution entitled them to "all privileges." They had been told the House was theirs, and they could do what they wanted. Not until the riot took place did the leaders learn that half of the boys were truants, that more than half came from broken homes, and that several had records with a number of social agencies or the juvenile court. "Everybody" had known the boys, but only their names and their faces, their ages and their hobbies.

The incident raised the question of "function" quite sharply. People asked whether the agency was equipped to handle these boys. Some believed that special training was necessary for the understanding of them. Others were quite definite that this was the place for them since they lived in the neighborhood.

The incident caused everyone to ask the question "What are we here for anyway?" The discussion was of special interest to the group leaders who were charged with the responsibility for the destruction of House property, for some of them had raised definite questions as to their own activity.

THE NEED FOR A CLEAR-CUT PURPOSE

Volunteer leaders are usually engaged in "gainful occupations." In their daily work they do everything with a purpose. If one is a salesman, he drives his car, not for fun but to make a sale. If one works on a machine, every move has its purpose. If one is a lawyer, each interview with a client has a definite aim: he wants facts with which to present his case in court.

If, however, one is asked why he is meeting with his Boy Scouts tonight, he might be somewhat puzzled and give very general answers, such as: To help them be better citizens; to teach them respect for the rights of others; to bring some happiness into their lives. Actually, there is no reason why his activity as group leader should not be as purposeful and as well-defined as any of his other work.

The first step toward definition of one's purpose as a group leader has to be a clarification of the function of the organization or setting in which one leads his group.

THE NEED FOR LIMITING WHAT WE TRY TO DO

Most agencies were founded by people who were greatly concerned about the welfare of their individual fellowmen. They wanted to help *all* of them. This was a good enough basis of operation for many years, but gradually, as people developed skill in helping others to help themselves, they also began to recognize the need for limitations. Some agencies, while accepting this need in theory, are still hesitant to modify their original "Open Door" policy because they feel that they have no right to keep anybody out who wishes help. While this is a generous and humanitarian viewpoint, it does not answer the question of whether or not the particular agency is really able to meet the needs of all the people who come.

If one compared an agency to a department store, where one

goes to find things he needs, the problem becomes clearer. A businessman would not invite the whole community to come to his store to buy "anything they need" in the furniture line, unless he had a supply of all the furniture commonly used by people. Similarly, if we advertise the program of our agency, we ought not to create the impression that people can find everything they need unless we are equipped to give it to them. If, for instance, there are a great many youngsters who hope to find a swimming pool and there is none, it should not be announced that people can find *all* sports at the place.

These fairly obvious examples deal with the conscious needs of people. Unconscious needs are more subtle and of course not always clear.

Take the very typical request of a group of youngsters for a place to meet. What do they really mean when they ask for help in finding a place in which to meet? Do they want just four walls and a table? Do they mean a place which is theirs and where they belong? Do they mean a home where they are undisturbed and can do what they want, unhampered by regulations and rules—a home, less crowded, more attractive than their own? Are they, perhaps, asking for help with problems which they cannot take to anyone else in the community? What do they really come for?

Another very common request is frequently made—a chance to play basketball. Why do they come with that request? What "merchandise" do the various members want to buy, what do they need? Just a court with two baskets and a ball? One might think of a certain boy in the basketball group who comes because he has a strong need to win, to be first. If one knows him well enough, one might understand why he can not stand to lose a single game and would rather turn in his sweater than be put on the bench. Someone else might come because it is important to prove to himself that he has some skills somewhere in life. This boy perhaps is not doing well in school, for reasons which are not apparent; perhaps he is overshadowed by an older brother who does well in everything he touches; perhaps he has been told that he is "no good," "clumsy"; and maybe the girls call him a "goon." For him it would be very important to achieve praise and, because he is tall, he sees a chance for it by making a place for himself on

the basketball team. Again, someone else in this same group of boys may be an utterly lonely lad whose strongest need is for companionship. Perhaps he is alone a good deal of the day and has been forced to take responsibilities long before he is ready for them. He may need to be helped, to be taken care of, by being fitted snugly into a larger group where other more dominating members take leadership and responsibility.

These are some possibilities. Every member comes for reasons of his own, and hopes to meet some of his needs—conscious and unconscious ones. All they tell us is: We want to play basketball.

WHAT SETTLEMENTS TRY TO DO

The function of the agency has to be determined in terms of its ability to meet some of these needs very skillfully. Because a great many settlement houses have given this problem thoughtful and deliberate consideration, the following statement of the functions of settlement houses, prepared under the auspices of a national agency, and with the help of specialists in the field, may be helpful:

The purpose which distinguishes the settlement from other groups and institutions that have the same basic philosophy is to develop among the people a sense of neighborhood. This purpose is promoted by helping neighbors to develop attitudes and skills that are necessary to good neighborhood relations.

The board and staff undertake to create this social climate by demonstrating these qualities in their relationships with each other and with settlement members and neighbors.

The effectiveness of a settlement is dependent, in large measure, on the capacities of its staff personnel.

The kinds of work which settlements do are:

1. Education and Recreation
2. Services to Individuals
3. Neighborhood Service
4. Social Education and Action
5. Experimental and Demonstration Projects

The clarification of the central purpose may be interpreted to mean that the education-recreation function performed is one of the media through which the settlement achieves its purpose of creating a "sense of neighborhood." The settlements' selection of activities, of participants, and of methods of planning and carrying

out education-recreation activities should be influenced by this central purpose. The interpretation and application of the other functions—services to individuals, neighborhood service, and social action—also should be related to the central purpose. (13)

Frequently, instead of facing this problem squarely, one finds that agencies substitute quantity for quality. They will point out their accomplishments in terms of numbers. Such agencies feel comfortable if they can demonstrate a large attendance, and like nothing better than to have a crowded dance floor, a packed gymnasium, and capacity audiences for moving pictures. In reality, they are competing with commercial recreation and not too successfully.

EACH AGENCY HAS ITS OWN FUNCTION

Then there are the agencies whose final goal is to indoctrinate youngsters with their particular philosophy or religion. The administration and boards of religious institutions, for instance, consider recreation a wholesome way in which to help young people to become identified with the philosophy of the church or synagogue. In the final analysis, they measure the success of the group experience in terms of enrollment in Sunday School or church attendance. Therefore, the atmosphere permeating their recreation is determined by the philosophy of the church.

For instance, the administration of an Orthodox synagogue will expect their group leaders to use Hebrew names for their clubs, or names associated with figures important in their history. They would hope that a leader would use the Hebrew or the Yiddish alphabet rather than the English in anagram or other letter games. Similarly, the administration of agencies associated with national or military organizations will expect the leaders to carry their spirit into each club. In camps of such organizations, one may expect emphasis on good marching order, group formations for assemblies, patriotic songs, and a relationship between adults and children, like that between officers and enlisted men.

In every case, the function of the agency differs from that of other agencies, and with it, the function of the group leader.

Very often the leader is not sufficiently acquainted with the

philosophy of the agency in which he works and therefore does not know what is expected of him. Some communities have felt that the reason for this lies in the fact that the agency is controlled and financed by a board or a community fund which is not sufficiently aware of the neighborhood fully to understand and interpret their needs. In spite of various attempts to bring the different groups serving the community together, the final responsibility for the handling of the daily contact with children and parents rests with the group leaders. Because of the healthy emphasis on local leadership and the trend toward breaking away from controls that are geographically, culturally, and financially removed from the community, it is sometimes forgotten that what eventually counts is the skill of the leader. It is as though a small community raises the funds for its own hospital and recruits doctors by sending local boys to school. While this in itself brings hospital and community closer together, it does not necessarily mean that they have the best doctors. The fact that a local boy becomes a doctor and returns as a finished physician to his home community does not necessarily make him the most skilled therapist. While the board can proudly point out that this is their own hospital, and while the community can claim that the doctors are their own boys, many a patient within the community might not get the help he needs because the choice of doctors has been determined by geographical considerations rather than professional ones.

This does not mean that because a group leader comes from a different city or state and has had a great deal of training he is necessarily more skillful than a local leader, but neither is the opposite true.

Whether the leader is of local origin or comes from a different street, city, or state is not really decisive, nor can we get perspective on the leader's job by looking at the source of the income that supports the agency. As in any sound business, the good leader has to deliver. What counts is the insight each member of his club has developed. What we must look for is the club member's improved relationship to his family, his friends, his school, his church, his place of work, his community. Does each member of the "Tigers" function as a person in the community better than before? Is he a happier person, a better integrated individual? Perhaps this is precisely what Board

President Jones had in mind when he said his agency is trying to keep youngsters "off the street." If he did, he might want to know just what services are being offered to whom, and why.

RECOGNIZING LIMITATIONS

To answer this question, some agencies are beginning to recognize the need for a test. This test is known as the "intake process." The concept of "intake" is a familiar one to agencies dealing with individuals: hospitals, case-work agencies, child-guidance clinics, institutions.

The intake worker, very often one of the most skilled workers, attempts to determine in one brief interview what kind of help is wanted and whether or not the agency is set up to give it. He tries to differentiate between the request and the underlying motives. Sometimes what is wanted seems to fall within the range of service the agency has to offer. At other times it does not. A woman might come to a case-work agency and ask for a nursery school for her child. An intake worker might ask a few questions about the child's age and the kind of school the mother is looking for, and take the case on in the hope that the right place can be found. That might be exactly the most helpful service the agency can give. But this mother might be an extremely disturbed woman who, because of her own disturbances and resulting inability to find steady employment, might not be in a position to pay for the kind of nursery school that this particular child needs. All she knows is that she wants a nursery school and this is what she tells the worker. Underneath this request there may be a deep need to straighten out her own personality problems which have affected her employment, her relationship with her husband, and perhaps with her child. The skilled intake worker will recognize that there is more to it than simply picking out a nursery school; she must determine in the brief interview whether her agency is set up to give this woman help for her deeper needs as well as help in meeting the particular request.

If the unskilled intake worker has accepted for her agency the request of this particular woman, without awareness of her real problems, the service might have consisted simply of referral to a nursery school. The woman would not have been

able to use the school because of her financial problems, and actually the agency would have done more harm than good by accepting the case and making such a referral.

The skilled intake worker is keenly aware of the limitations within the agency and within the client. Recognition of limitations of the kind of services and skills an agency has to offer is essential to the quality of its performance. Men and women working in the field of human relations like people and want to help them. It is much more difficult for any worker to say no to a request than to accept it. It takes much more skill and, in the long run, is more human and helpful not to accept a case or a group, if we are very clear that we cannot really help.

When the inability to help is as obvious as the absence of a swimming pool, it is extremely simple to say no, even when we know that youngsters in the hot summer time need a swimming pool more than anything else. The reason that we very often accept groups whom we can not really serve is because we are not clear about what they need. It is our job to find out as quickly and as easily as possible what services people want from us, over and above the superficial request.

Not all group-work agencies have accepted the need for the intake process. Sometimes they either have no intake or more often rely on a so-called registration procedure, which is a clerical rather than a professional process. The people coming are asked their names, their addresses, and a few other statistical facts. In addition they are asked, "What are you interested in?" This seldom tells us any more about the person than that he likes to play basketball or "make something." On the whole, agencies dealing with groups show a lack of dynamic (not statistical) information that could help them to understand what kind of services are best needed for what person. Usually, the intake process takes place in a hit or miss way rather than by careful screening of needs and the agency's resources.

Not until a member of a group becomes conspicuous because of some unusual behavior do group leaders find out something more about the boy or girl or the father or mother than their names and addresses. When one of the boys who has been "kept off the streets" throws a chair out of the window

that hits a board member on the head, someone will ask what might be the matter with this boy. By that time, the boy and his group feel so guilty that the agency has little chance of helping them. During the two or three years while he was coming regularly to the agency as one of the 3,000 members counted on statistical reports and submitted to the welfare fund, the agency had used the funds received to build a bigger and better gymnasium or an elevator. It is usually quite easy for an agency to raise funds for something as tangible as a gymnasium or a new roof, while the advantages of higher professional standards are not always as easily interpreted.

The necessity for clarification of function applies to all agencies. Once this has been recognized, some kind of screening device or intake process will follow as a natural next step. When this happens, the emphasis of agencies dealing with groups will be on the real needs of individuals and groups, leaders will be more concerned with the understanding of these than with promoting preconceived philosophies of their local or national agencies. Group work will become known for its real meaning, a "method of work with individuals in a group used to affect the social process taking place within the group." (14)

The boy who threw the chair out of the window will be understood long before he has expressed his needs in that kind of antisocial behavior. The girl who cannot make friends, and continually disrupts the meeting in order to get attention, will not be excluded but will be understood long before her behavior is expressed in a form unacceptable to the group. Youngsters who until now have only known basketball will no longer have to spend their time in pool-rooms and drug stores on nights when the basketball court is taken. They will not have to declare that they are not interested in anything else nor will their only pleasures be in winning a game. They will not have to keep their feelings and problems to themselves or express them in such forms as truancy, delinquency, or running away from home.

Youngsters living in the country will not have to look wistfully at their pals as they come with their 4-H club to the county fair. The leader, once he makes it his business really

to understand young people, will determine the setup of the club according to what the majority of young people in the area really need.

Boys' clubs will no longer be satisfied with a setup that attracts youngsters who can "fit in." They will fit themselves to the needs of the large majority of the boys in their area.

Camp counselors will no longer be confronted with boys or girls who after weeks of sulkiness will come out and tell them that they did not want to go to camp in the first place. The organizations that have interviewed the parents before camp will learn to be more selective in their choice and try to get some real understanding of the youngster for whom the camp experience is supposed to be good.

IN BRIEF

Leaders and groups meet in specific settings that, for the purpose of simplification, are called "agencies." The purpose of the agency has to be determined by the needs of the community in which it functions. Because any community has more needs than any agency can meet, it is necessary to recognize limitations. This means: Agencies cannot serve everybody and have to make choices.

Criteria for choices depend on the understanding of the neighborhood. Settlement houses more than other groups with the same basic philosophy are interested in developing a "sense of neighborhood." They are promoting this purpose to help neighbors to develop attitudes and skills that are necessary to good relations.

The physical equipment of the agency should not be left to chance but be determined by the needs of the community. To keep people "off the street" or to expect to help with the "ball and bat" approach is not realistic. After limitations have been determined, any agency will have to decide whom they can serve best with their existing facilities. Only after real understanding of the needs of the people can the agency tell whether or not it is equipped to meet this need. Because we do not always have criteria for selection, we often go by the "hit and miss" method which has been found to be impractical.

SUGGESTED READING

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Summertime

BETWEEN JUNE AND SEPTEMBER the group leader is known as the camp counselor. In addition to teachers and trained group workers, camps frequently attract college students who bring with them a liking for nature and children, some general knowledge of behavior, but sometimes also the illusion that this is a part vacation. It is very necessary for a counselor to know that the eight weeks out in the beautiful woods and near that famous lake are going to be hard work.

In any good camp, the cabin is the home base. It represents an intimate family unit in the larger structure of the camp city. The counselor who lives, eats, and sleeps with his small family is the basis of the camp. Camp can be no better than the relationship of the cabin counselor to his small group. All the other "special activities" are additional means of enriching camp life. No matter how many pageants, water carnivals, treasure hunts, and covered-wagon trips there are, the cabin counselor is the heart of the camp.

He is exactly like the leader of a club or group in any other setting. His relationship to his cabin mates needs to be sound in order to make the whole camp experience meaningful to them. Because he lives with them every day for at least two weeks, he can do more good than a group leader in the home situation and much more harm.

THE CAMP COUNSELOR THINKS ABOUT HIS JOB

From the very beginning, the counselor must be clear about what he is trying to do. Without saying it in so many words (for of course the children are not ready for a sermon) this is what he thinks, as on the first day they begin life together:

1. Here we are, eight people who are strangers one to another. The sooner we become a group, the sooner we can have some real fun.
2. We are all different, but as long as we live together we are going to respect one another's differences. Some are short, some tall.

Each one has some fears. Some are afraid of swimming, others of the dark. Some will be homesick, others may wet the bed or have trouble with eating. We are not going to make fun of anyone's fears. Some are rich and some are poor; some are Catholic and some Jewish; some are Negro and some Italian. We are not going to make fun of these differences between us; we are going to respect them.

3. Some fellows will be well-liked, others not-so-well-liked. That is perfectly natural, and it does not mean that the more popular ones are better individuals.

4. Interests will vary. Some will want to go hiking and others rowing. We are going to satisfy as many interests as possible within the time at our command. If we can never agree on any one thing, it will be difficult to do anything.

5. Our cabin is part of the total camp. The camp has certain rules over which I have no control. We want to try to help one another to live within those rules.

These are some of the principles the cabin counselors will need to keep in mind from the very beginning. Each counselor will find his own way of giving them practical expression in the camp season ahead. Respect for the differences in individuals is a particularly important point. It was once effectively expressed by a counselor who asked his campers to find in all the woods around them two identical leaves. Through their discovery that nature has made every leaf different from all others, these city youngsters got their first glimpse of the infinite and complicated differences in individual human beings. On the other hand, it is not realistic to try to *force* a cabin into giving the appearance of a "big happy family." Rather, it is much more helpful to teach campers to accept individual likes and dislikes in their stride and still live together.

As group feeling develops, stimulated by skilled leadership, discipline grows, and more complicated group activities become possible. The discussion of discipline in the earlier chapter applies fully to the cabin group.

JOHNNY DOESN'T LIKE THE WATER

Very often the counselor himself violates the group atmosphere by yielding to his own needs, rather than to those of the campers. For example, if he is convinced that there can be no camp life without swimming, his attitude toward a

camper who fears the water may prevent him from being of real help. The following example is taken from a fairly typical camp situation:

A group of six boys between the ages of ten and twelve are getting into their bathing trunks and talking excitedly about the fun of swimming. One of them claims he has a headache. Since he has used this excuse for several days, the others have decided that he is really afraid of water. As the counselor joins his group, ready to take them down to the lake, he is informed that Johnny has a headache again. They let him know by their remarks and imitation of Johnny's manner of speaking that they do not believe in Johnny's headaches. The counselor remarks that Johnny seems to get a headache every day around eleven o'clock when it is time for swimming. All but Johnny are hugely amused. One of the boys scornfully condemns Johnny as "yellow," to which Johnny protests as strongly as he can.

The counselor, in an unrealistic attempt to bolster up Johnny, announces that of course Johnny is not afraid of water, adding with a smile: "Are you Johnny?" Johnny shakes his head miserably. He cannot possibly admit his fear in the face of his group's attitude and the counselor's false assurance. He is now on the spot, and stays there as the group goes down to the lake and into the water.

Before Johnny is anywhere near the water, his cronies tease him, urging to prove his courage, inviting him with voices to come on in—"the water's fine!" Johnny shivers with fear, but looking behind him sees the husky counselor, suntanned and muscular, who nods reassuringly and promises to rescue him if anything goes wrong. Some of the boys find Johnny's progress too slow; they try to push him in or splash him. Here the counselor steps in, since he believes that nobody should be forced into the water. Obviously, he is concerned only with physical force and unaware of other pressures that have already been applied. As Johnny proceeds to get his feet wet, the counselor takes his hand and talks to him. He goes as far as to promise him some special treat after dinner. Apparently the leader's reputation seems to be at stake if Johnny does not go into the water.

All the while Johnny is near the crying point; he is cold and

utterly miserable. Gingerly, holding tight to the counselor's hand, Johnny wades in up to his knees. After a time, the counselor, deciding that it is not good to give Johnny all the attention, lets go his hand. Since most of the boys are by now too busy enjoying themselves, the interest in Johnny subsides and he soon retreats to the beach. Of course the teasing is resumed when the others come out of the water until the counselor puts a stop to it. But the boys manage to express their scorn in other ways. After they are all dressed, Johnny feels safer, but his reputation in the group is badly damaged.

With slight variations, this experience is repeated day after day. At the end of the camp season, Johnny's father is disappointed because Johnny has still not learned how to swim. Incidentally, it may have been father's insistence on Johnny learning to swim at an early age that originally created the fears which were further deepened by the counselor's unskillful handling.

If anyone had told this counselor that his method of handling the situation only aggravated Johnny's fear, he would have been quite incensed. Did he not protect Johnny from the group, hold his hand, and try to make him at home in the water? Surely no one could have done more! Indeed, this counselor's method is fairly typical of the way in which young leaders often hope to give assurance to children in camp.

FEARS ARE SOMETIMES AS HARD TO TREAT AS A BROKEN LEG

Fears are as real as any physical handicap. Ignoring a fear, like ignoring a broken leg, does not help to overcome it. Quite the contrary; it is as necessary to accept fears realistically and without condemnation as a broken leg. It would not occur to the counselor to say to the boy with the broken leg? "Your leg really isn't broken, is it?" when everybody can see that the leg is broken. He will have to learn to see that fear is as real as that. General encouragement is considered a very helpful device. Often it takes the form of a slap on the back or a cheery, "Atta-boy!" It is well to recognize that such expressions are general, casual, and superficial devices that have in reality little meaning unless they are made consciously and with knowledge of the individual and his problems.

If, for example, Johnny were a child who would want to try hard to overcome his own handicaps of fear, a well-placed and well-timed word of encouragement by the counselor might be good medicine. In the case described above, such encouragement was not indicated. There it would have been necessary to accept his fears without shame. The acceptance itself would give the reassurance that the counselor's statement "You are not afraid Johnny, are you?" failed to give. Acceptance of weaknesses—and everybody has them—is possible only if the group atmosphere has been created in which such expressions are possible.

The same is true for other expressions of difficulties or fears. Take, for example, the well-known problem of bed-wetting, which is common in various age-groups in camps and is often handled without any real understanding of the symptom. Some camps have special names for children who wet their beds, such as "marines." This practice serves no purpose other than to express adult hostility and does little to help the situation.

Bed-wetting may be due to emotional or physical causes, or a combination of both. Counselors are usually not trained to treat either of these. On the whole, they had better leave the whole matter alone, just as they would leave a person alone with a fractured leg, not venturing to lift him up or put him on a bed. Anyone who has taken a first-aid course has learned that he will do more damage than good by moving a person with a fracture. After years of conscientious training by the Red Cross, this knowledge has now been widely accepted. When it comes to an emotional problem, however, we not only "lift up" the injured person but we make fun of him. The thoughtful counselor will observe other symptoms besides bed-wetting and try to see them in their context.

"REGRESSION" TO CHILDHOOD BEHAVIOR

It is well known that we often regress to earlier stages of behavior in strange or unaccustomed situations, particularly when we are under strain. A well-known actor whose left hand had been hit for years by an ignorant school teacher when he tried to write with it, begins to stammer when he is very tired or under great pressure. A national leader in civic affairs will

get an upset stomach if she eats spinach, because she had been forced by an aunt to eat this particular vegetable daily for several years. A sixteen-year-old daughter of divorced parents, who lives with her mother, speaks in a whining voice, using baby talk when her father comes to visit her once a year.

You can add any number of examples from your own experience and that of friends to illustrate how we regress to earlier stages of behavior under certain pressures. Sometimes, as in bed-wetting, we go back to a satisfaction that we had in the first three or four years of our lives. Such regressions have unconscious motivations and cannot be controlled solely by good intentions or will power. Therefore, appeals to "discipline," threats of punishment, or promises of rewards only serve to accentuate the already existing conflict, to produce more guilt, and to deepen the basic feeling of insecurity.

Where the reasons for bed-wetting are clearly physical, it belongs within the competence of a physician. Where emotional factors are involved, the wisest course is for the counselor to seek to understand the youngster and help him to become more secure within himself and his cabin group, so that in time he will cease to revert to earlier forms of satisfaction and learn to enjoy the present. Instead of dealing with bed-wetting, *per se*, the counselor will want to follow the camper in his experiences throughout the day, in order to help him accept the new environment completely. If the youngster stops wetting the bed, the counselor will know that he is happier in camp now.

The matter of wet sheets and mattresses should be handled in the same way in which any spilling accident is handled. There is no reason why bed-wetting should be treated differently or with more emphasis than if one spilled milk or got one's clothes wet in the rain. The more casually such matters are handled, the sooner they will be over. The fact that a young man of twenty is in charge of a group of children does not give him the right to expound his own moralistic philosophies or to give out advice freely. Paramount again is the group climate developed by the counselor in which failures or weaknesses are fully accepted. Where the atmosphere is tense, not permissive, and charged with competitive thinking, little will be accomplished by spending the summer in camp.

Another very typical camp problem is homesickness. Out of one hundred counselors questioned in regard to their handling of homesickness, ninety-eight proposed to divert the child's attention, to make him "forget" his homesickness, and to provide a good time instead. Only two counselors were able fully to accept the fact that a child very frequently finds it difficult to live away from his parents and needs to express this feeling through his behavior. Of these two, only one proposed to help the youngster verbalize his feelings by encouraging him to talk about it. All the others believed that the feeling of homesickness would be strengthened if expressed, and weakened if "diverted."

Such assumptions are not even realistic for the very young child. To promise a crying child some candy may stop his crying for the moment, but sooner or later he will come back to the cause of his difficulty. One can divert a youngster's concern for a short time, but if it is real, it will come up again.

There is a misconception prevalent that we solve problems if we don't talk about them. Some people go so far as to believe that talking with children about conflicts or problems "puts ideas in their heads." It is important to remember that the ideas were in their heads in the first place. They express their ideas in various forms of behavior—by moodiness, by complaining, by appearing disinterested, by being contrary, by refusing to participate, by crying, in many other ways.

The purpose of such expressions is to discharge tension. Our function should be to serve as the sounding board against which this tension can be discharged. In other words, our job, once again, is to accept a child's feelings, encourage him to express them, to listen sympathetically, and to get behind the outward manifestation of the difficulty to the difficulty itself.

HOMESICKNESS

Why do counselors feel that they have to divert homesickness? Do they feel it reflects on their ability to keep children happy away from home? It is really not possible for anyone to take the place of a beloved parent; certainly it is quite impossible to approximate the parent's place in a few weeks' time. It would be very helpful if counselors could create an at-

mosphere in which homesickness is accepted as a perfectly normal stage of camp adjustment. It would help if we could say, right at the beginning of camp, that of course many campers will be homesick and wish they could see their parents. We might say that almost every child goes through such a stage and that we hope that the experience in camp will be a happy one in spite of occasional cases of homesickness. The very fact that homesickness is recognized and discussed does not "put ideas" in a child's head, but lets him know that he does not need to be ashamed of his natural feelings. It will do more to prevent the serious effects of homesickness than all the attempts to divert it.

EATING HABITS

Akin to swimming, bed-wetting, and homesickness, is the problem of peculiar eating habits. Very often the camp policy with regard to food is determined by financial considerations, since food is the largest single item in the camp budget after salaries. Sometimes, under the guise of "simplicity," money is saved for the owners of certain camps; but as a rule food is one item to which a camp gives its best, in line with the latest knowledge of food values and body needs. The real problem for the counselor is to know what to do with the child who refuses certain foods, who eats too slowly, who wants more seconds than are available, who eats too little, who only wants his dessert, or whose table manners disturb the tone of the dining hall.

When it comes to problems connected with eating, we must remember that food originally was the first bond of affection between the infant and his mother. Long before he knew his mother, he had associations with her through her milk or other foods she offered him. Thus the emotional implications in eating need to be kept in mind. Difficulty in eating may be purely physical, though more often it is emotional; occasionally it is both. As with other difficulties described before, we want to attempt to see this symptom as part of the total personality and not get involved in this one issue.

If I find a boy constantly rejecting his food, and with a good deal of feeling, I begin to wonder what else he rejects in camp.

The chances are that he is rejecting the total camp experience, for it is unlikely that a boy who has made a good adjustment to his cabin group and counselor, and who has accepted the separation from home, should constantly have difficulty in the dining room.

Where the eating problem, then, is recognized as one of many symptoms of maladjustment, the thing to do is to consult with the head of the camp or, if possible, with the particular staff member who is equipped to give us an understanding of the child's background. In any case, it is vitally important that the counselor does not fall into the trap of considering his charge's failure to eat a failure on his own part. Again, as in all instances where the counselor seeks to help, he needs first to understand the child.

A great many children have definite likes and dislikes for certain foods. Usually, we do not know how these preferences were established; all we can do is to observe that they exist. We have mentioned before that new foods, like any new experience, are difficult for an insecure person to accept. You may get him to try something new if he has enough confidence in you and is not made to feel that he has to like what is offered him. Where the person puts on a great show of resistance, we know that he is not ready for the new food. Frequently, a counselor forgets that his relationship to his young charges is more important than a personal victory on any given issue. Thus, I might be able to force a youngster to eat certain foods, but the price I pay for this victory is too high. I pay with my relationship to him, which in the end is what counts when it comes to permanent values in any experience.

Again, as with fears of the water or homesickness, we need a group climate in which dislikes can be accepted. Youngsters are usually more reasonable than people give them credit for. They know very well that we cannot cook for each individual and that there will be times when they will dislike some of the dishes served. It is not realistic to hope to establish new food habits or change food patterns in the few short weeks in camp. Food habits vary with national and cultural groups, and children coming from such groups are used to the particular way in which their mothers cook at home. Naturally, it is not pos-

sible to expect the same food in camp as at home, so there are bound to be strong reactions for or against certain foods served. It does not mean that there is something wrong with the camp kitchen.

There are other reasons for food problems besides physical, emotional, and cultural factors. The moment a child senses your anxiety about food, he will use the mealtime as an opportunity to tease. Sometimes he will tell you that you can't make him eat, and you know that is right. This is one time when he can get even with you. The more you insist, the more he will resist, getting a great deal of satisfaction from your defeat.

A counselor may have given the camper no cause for combat, and yet there are times when he seems to need to express his independence. Perhaps the counselor's anxiety is enough to produce this reaction. It is the child's way of telling us to keep our needs apart from theirs. But it may be more than that. The counselor's use of authority, his enforcement of camp rules, may have created a god deal of resentment. Sometimes refusing to eat is the only way in which campers can tell us how they feel about our leadership. Thus a group of twelve-year-old girls, unable to express themselves freely enough to their counselor, organized a hunger strike and at one meal touched no food. While, of course, this is an extreme situation, there are many variations of such a reaction.

On the other hand, we need to stress again that understanding does not mean indulgence. On the contrary, understanding implies both love and firmness. Once we have established a rule in regard to eating—and this rule had better be sound—we will need to stick by it wherever possible. Nothing is more threatening to an adult's prestige than a "yes, but" attitude.

If the structure of camp life is sound and is closely related to the function or purpose, of camping, if cabin relationships are healthy, there will be little need for rules. In a genuine group, the individuals will submerge their likes and dislikes in the larger interests of the cabin; they will be self-disciplined. But if many rules and regulations are needed to maintain order, one will want to question the total setup. If the setup is not sound, leaders will have difficulty in the dining room and may have to accept the unpleasant fact that there is little they can do about it.

CLIQUEs

Another problem is the presence, early in a cabin formation, of cliques. Many a counselor is quite disturbed to find two or three youngsters pairing off and separating themselves from the rest of the group. Because he does not always understand the psychology involved, he is quite at a loss as to how to handle it and, depending on his temperament, he resorts to various tricks to do away with it. A favorite device is to "break up" the clique by putting the individuals into different cabins. Another familiar treatment is to exert "group pressure" upon members of the clique. Occasionally, the leader tries to remedy the situation by making speeches about sportsmanship and fair play; and not infrequently, when the leader has been unsuccessful, members of cliques have been sent home. While this last measure may sometimes be necessary, it is an emergency measure that is too frequently employed.

Why do youngsters form a clique rather than join the group? We need to understand their motivation first before we can hope to help them. We will get some help in understanding such behavior if we remember that everyone has gone through a stage in which he was not able to associate with more than one person at a time.

You will recall that the very small child is not ready to play with everyone. A two-year-old prefers to play by himself, even though he may be among a dozen others of his age. Gradually he begins to reach out, until, depending on his emotional and social maturity, he will play with one or two children for a short span of time. Group games are usually possible only occasionally and for a limited time. As he grows older, he may have a few selected friends whom he cherishes and whom he does not wish to share with others. It is as though he were holding on to the one or two youngsters with whom he feels secure. At the kindergarten, or first- or second-grade level, we still do not find much group feeling, but actually a conglomeration of many little cliques. This in itself constitutes a decided advance over the three- or four-year-old level, but of course is still a far cry from the twelve-year-old group that predominates at camp.

We know that, at the kindergarten level, associations with

larger groups are not to be expected yet. We do not call these small units of friendship cliques, although we do when the same pattern occurs a few years later. Apparently, older children who tend to form cliques and do not join in the larger group are behaving as they did when they were much younger. They do not seem ready to share with more than one or two others, but find security in small, intimate units.

If leaders were less concerned that everyone participate, many of these small friendship groups or cliques could exist only as long as the members felt the need for them. Everyone needs to experience small and intimate friendships before he can branch out into the larger group. These subgroups are a necessary part of social development and should not be broken up by any adult ambition to have one "big, happy family." This applies not only to leaders, but also to parents who suddenly find their growing son or daughter associating very intimately with one particular pal, of whom they may even disapprove. Before tendering the advice that it is "better to have many friends," parents and leaders will do well to remember that one can only have many friends after he has had one close friend.

The camp counselor will rightfully ask what is to be done about these small cliques, since it is obvious that some of them tend to become exclusive and in that sense a menace to the larger group or even the camp. As always, the process of helping begins with understanding the problem. Specifically, what can he do?

He might begin by sharpening his observation of a clique, comparing the behavior of its members in the cabin with their behavior in other situations in camp. As soon as the counselor has spotted a clique, he should take the opportunity to ask the swimming counselor, the crafts counselor, the music counselor—anyone with whom the youngsters come in contact—about their behavior in these other activities. This need not entail a formal and lengthy conference. One can ask how Sam and Eddie are doing in music on the way to the dining room, during a campfire, or on the way back for rest period. It can be done without any loss of time, casually and quickly. We are taking pains to point out that this is not a time-consuming investiga-

tion but a casual and speedy check-up on one's own observations. Any conscientious counselor is in position to get this information within his schedule if he is interested in getting it.

Let us assume that the other counselors report the same behavior of Sam and Eddie that their own counselor has observed. They all agree that those two boys always stick together, work on the same project, refuse to sing, sit in the corner making funny noises, interrupt the campfire program, refuse to co-operate. It is pretty certain, then, that the behavior of Sam and Eddie represents a pattern and is not due to the counselor's handling alone. Knowing something of the dynamics of this pattern, the counselor will not want to lecture them, because apparently the boys are not able to use the knowledge he tries to give them. They may be highly intelligent boys, but emotionally and socially they are not so well developed. The counselor will also question the wisdom of breaking up the team by putting Sam in one cabin and Eddie in another. They will certainly resent very deeply his destroying the one bond of friendship they have been able to build, and usually neither will succeed in becoming part of the new group. Their union should be accepted without hostility.

It is sound to be aware of the positive aspects within a clique, and it is unwise to try to change this pattern, because most likely it can't be done in the short time the boys will be at camp. It is better that the counselor accept them as two youngsters who need each other and who cannot yet be on their own. The very fact that their friendship is accepted will help them to accept the counselor, and through him the group which he leads. It is practically hopeless to try to integrate a clique into a group by stressing elements common between them. If that technique succeeds at all, it will surely be at the cost of the boys' relationship to the counselor.

As soon as the counselor takes sides with the group against the clique, he alienates the clique further from him and from the other campers. The counselor himself is the key to bridging the gap between clique and group. In this position, he may have to protect Sam and Eddie at times from the wrath of the group. When it comes to voting, the group might reach a decision and break out in angry chorus against Sam and Eddie.

who "again have to be different." It would then be the counselor's place to express in simple words why Sam and Eddie behave as they do.

He might say something like this:

Take it easy, fellows. Sam and Eddie are very good friends; and if they don't always agree with you, that does not mean that you are better than they are. They know each other better than they know you; and maybe if you discover one another, you will agree on some decisions. It is quite all right not to agree on everything. One of the reasons you are in the camp, is to learn to do things together. For some people, this is harder to do than for others. It means we need to be more patient with one another and not think that those who disagree spoil the fun. Let us look at it from Sam and Eddie's point of view. From where they sit, it is you who spoil their fun. Since most of you want to go on a hike and Sam and Eddie want to stay here, let's go. If Sam and Eddie want to go to the craft shop, that can be arranged.

This kind of approach is necessary only if the clique formation is very pronounced and if the counselor is fairly sure that any attempt at persuasion would fail.

Sam and Eddie may also need more of the counselor's attention than some of the others who already enjoy the security that comes from belonging to a larger group. This raises the question of fairness on the part of the counselor.

Sometimes leaders or counselors confuse the handling of a group with impersonal mass procedure. They say they must treat everybody alike. This philosophy in the end leads to an unimaginative group, with very little chance for individual differences. The fear of being called unfair is uppermost in the counselor's mind. Most youngsters are perfectly reasonable and understand that people are different. They are, however, very quick to react when they sense instinctively that one's individual attention toward them is based, not on their needs, but on one's own preference for someone in the group.

There is a world of difference between the leader who gives a child some extra time in order to understand him better or because he needs more help, and the leader who takes a fancy to a child because he is particularly attractive to him for one reason or another. The latter kind of attention has a heavy emotional undertone, which can be sensed by everyone and therefore is strongly resented by the group. This is justified,

too, because they have a right to expect the leader to keep his own needs apart from theirs. The first kind of attention, however, based on the youngster's need, is perfectly acceptable to others and can easily be verbalized by the leader. The difference is very subtle and cannot be confused by speeches about fairness and liking everybody. The leader's own behavior, much more than his speeches, will tell the youngsters what he stands for. If a counselor is really interested in helping individuals, the members of his group will soon respect him for it. There will be no need for apologies if the counselor gives Sam and Eddie some extra time in order to cement his relationship with them. Members of the group will have experienced, by the counselor's attitude toward them, his concern for their individual welfare.

If there are some youngsters who express jealousy over the counselor's attention to Sam and Eddie, that affords him a fine opportunity to interpret Sam and Eddie's needs, which in turn will help them as well as the group. A counselor is showing no partiality if he gives each camper as much attention as possible. It is not always possible to give a boy as much individual attention as he needs. In such cases, it is helpful to express one's sincere regret. The very fact that his need is recognized is already a small measure of help.

The danger lies in the extremes: either a counselor tends to treat his campers all alike, or he spends all his time with one or two individuals. Neither of these extremes is helpful. It is the counselor's job to understand the individual and help him through the group, which means that every member of the group is entitled to his individual attention, as long as it does not hamper his ability to focus clearly on the total group. This subtle medium is hard to achieve and maintain, and every so often the best counselor finds himself swinging toward one of these two extremes.

In order to move from one extreme toward the middle, one needs to know which of the two extremes one leans toward. If a counselor is the type who easily becomes involved with some individual problem, he will do well to concern himself with the interaction between members of his group. This spells progress for him and is more helpful than for him to spend all his time with one camper, who may need the attention

of an individual worker. On the other side, if the counselor is the type to pay little attention who is interested primarily in the group, who is impressed by uniformity of behavior, he should spend more time with individual campers. This will help him to grow as a leader and will benefit more people.

The most helpful road, then, lies in the middle, between those two extremes. It is up to the counselor to veer away from the extreme nearest his natural inclinations, toward the middle. If he succeeds with conscious and skillful understanding of himself to accomplish this difficult job, he will be fair to both his group and the individuals within it.

IN BRIEF

In a good camp, the cabin is the home base. The counselor in charge of the cabin is the heart of the camp.

The counselor can set the tone for his cabin from the beginning. There are four major points that he might make in order to accomplish this:

1. Striving for a real group.
2. Stress on and respect for difference in appearance, race, religion, habits, fears.
3. Acceptance of popular and unpopular children; assumption of disagreements.
4. Interpretation of camp rules.

Some of the typical problems that leaders in camp have to cope with are based on fear. Counselors must remember that fears are as real as physical handicaps and need to be accepted without prejudice. Reassurance by itself is useless unless it is based on understanding.

Bet-wetting is due to a number of causes. The problem is difficult to accept by counselors, but they would do better to leave it alone. Where it is due to emotional causes, the counselor's job is to help the youngster in his camp activities to become more secure. Where this problem is due to physical causes, it is the physician's job to handle it.

Homesickness is a normal camp problem. It is not necessary to divert campers' attention and make them forget that they have a home. It is quite all right to help them to express their homesickness and to accept such behavior as normal.

Eating difficulties usually connote emotional difficulties. Food habits are also determined by the family, and it is not possible to change these in a few short weeks at camp. Where there are too many rules, the total setup of camp ought to be questioned. If

the setup is sound and related to program, if relationships to the counselor and the cabin are healthy, few rules are needed.

Frequently, counselors find themselves disturbed by the formation of cliques. Youngsters who form cliques indicate by their behavior that they are not yet ready to share with a larger group. Once the leader understands that he is dealing with a pattern of insecure behavior, he will try to give more warmth, more security, because these children apparently need it.

To give more attention to one child than to another is not in itself unfair. It is called unfair, and rightly so, if the attention is given because the counselor has taken a fancy to a youngster, rather than because the child needs it.

Sunday Morning

ANOTHER SETTING in which groups and leaders meet is the Sunday School. We have chosen it because it lends itself well as an illustration of mental hygiene in group work and education. Besides the significance that religious education has in this country, the specific role of the Sunday School teacher or leader points up problems common to both fields. The group is a subtle combination of both voluntary and involuntary attendance.

Children are not required to attend Sunday School by law, but do so at the request of their parents, which often is as real as the law. Their attendance is not wholly voluntary; yet when it comes to the play period after the lesson, they go without pressure. It is both non-voluntary and voluntary, school and recreation, work and play. And in this sense, the Sunday School teacher functions in at least two capacities:

1. She is in the unique position of being able to bridge the gap between work and play, and so can help to overcome resistance against learning and playing.

2. She can individualize with her small classes and clubs. In fact, she will have to individualize if she wants to achieve goals with her subject matter.

In many ways the modern Sunday School teacher is teaching mental hygiene. While she more often calls it "spiritual guidance," in reality she is concerned as much with attitudes as with facts. She believes that facts about religion have more meaning if the attitudes are sound.

SHY BARBARA

Let us take the case of Barbara, a bright eight-year-old girl with no particular problems. She lived in a typical American city, attended a good public school and a good Sunday School, and came from a small, average family. She got along well in school, had a few friends, played the piano, belonged to the

school dramatic club, rode a bicycle, read the funny papers, and had her favorite movie heroes. Since the age of six, she had gone to camp for the summer. Barbara's day was well regulated between school, play, and dinner with her family. Her father owned a drugstore; the mother stayed at home with the five-year-old little brother. The relationship between Barbara and her brother was good, with the normal amount of jealousy and rivalry for the parents' attention. The parents were happily married and in moderate financial circumstances.

All in all, Barbara was a happy child, pleasant, well liked, contented. Because she was not aggressive, did her work well, never got into trouble, always came on time and looked clean and neat, none of her leaders or teachers ever got to know her well, they being preoccupied with children whose problems demanded immediate attention. It was her Sunday School teacher, Mrs. Brown, who came to understand Barbara as she really was, because she had the opportunity to observe her at close range. Since she kept records of every child and made it her business to establish contact with the parents, her impression of Barbara was different from that of all the rest.

Mrs. Brown first noticed Barbara after her group had been asked to write up one class session for the school paper. The teacher had planned to use the most original composition for publication. As she sat in her office reading page after page, she was struck by the style, the handwriting, and the feeling of Barbara's contribution. She had to admit to herself that she could not picture the author, although she knew quite a few of the other pupils. Laughingly, she remarked to her husband that here again was an illustration of her contention that, in our society, normal people are sadly neglected.

Barbara's composition was chosen for the paper, and Mrs. Brown spent a few minutes discussing it with her the following Sunday. In this brief and informal talk, the teacher noted the girl's shyness and her genuine surprise at learning that her composition had been chosen. During the interview, Barbara's friend, Louise, came and asked whether her contribution might not also be printed, but it was explained that this was not possible. Barbara's discomfort was apparent as she said: "I don't really mind if you print Louise's composition instead."

Struck by the girl's lack of self-assertion and normal aggress-

sion, Mrs. Brown made it her business to observe Barbara more carefully in other activities. When parts were being assigned for a play at Christmastime, and the student teacher in charge called for volunteers, Mrs. Brown noticed that Barbara sat modestly behind Louise, raising her hand slightly, while Louise and a few others caught the teacher's eye and got the leading parts. This left only the "people from the village," so Barbara became one of them. At one rehearsal, when the girl playing the part of a shepherd was absent, Mrs. Brown suggested casually that Barbara try this part. Both she and the student teacher were struck by the child's excellent performance. Gradually, Mrs. Brown traced this same pattern through all of Barbara's activities. No matter what the assignment, Barbara always seemed to be one of the last ones to be given a chance, and because Barbara never complained, but did whatever was assigned her cheerfully and well, this pattern never varied.

In order to substantiate her impressions further, Mrs. Brown went out of her way to talk with Barbara's mother, after a parents' gathering. There she learned that Barbara, as the first child, had been much indulged by her grandmother and her father for the first three years of her life, but that since then she had been put in a position of "big sister," who was not allowed to compete with baby brother. Barbara's mother was able to fill in many details about Barbara's personality pattern. She told Mrs. Brown about the kindergarten reports, which already showed a child who found it difficult to stand up against competition and who had limited herself to a few selected contacts in her group. According to the mother, Barbara was generally liked in school, but was hardly ever elected for any office. Since the schoolteacher never interfered in school elections, the more aggressive children took over, while Barbara took a back seat. Once or twice Barbara had spoken up for herself, but had done so in such an emotional and awkward way that the teacher had quickly put her in her place, thus discouraging any further tendency toward normal aggression and self-assertion.

By continuing her observation of Barbara in Sunday School and by occasional informal chats with the girl after school, Mrs. Brown uncovered some of the child's deeper needs, which had been unmet until now. She began to see how the group

played an important part as well. Particularly Louise, the only child of an aggressive businesswoman, stood out through her ability to push herself into leading positions in Sunday School and Cub Scout troop. This was further encouraged by Louise's mother, who on occasion put pressure on the student teacher or Scout leader to make sure that Louise got the best parts. Mrs. Brown could see how this affected Barbara, who somehow never seemed to come into her own, in spite of an attractive appearance, excellent abilities, and a pleasant personality.

This pattern was broken once Mrs. Brown had succeeded in understanding Barbara better. She was in a position to do so because she saw Barbara in a small group setting, had through her insight made contact with the home and had co-ordinated her knowledge with the girl's public school history. All this was done slowly and carefully, so that Barbara was never aware of Mrs. Brown's very personal interest and hardly noticed the gradual change that took place through the leader's deliberate direction.

Mrs. Brown's campaign in Barbara's behalf was carried on very quietly. At first she talked with Barbara a little more often than she had in the past, which in itself gave Barbara status in the group, at the same time that it aroused jealousy in Louise. Eventually, Barbara felt free to talk with Mrs. Brown about Louise and was encouraged to stand up against her. Then Mrs. Brown asked that Barbara be assigned to the editorial board of the school newspaper, holding out against Louise's mother. Since she did her job well, the editor and the other members of the school paper accepted Barbara, realizing quickly that here was a youngster who had to be pushed and was much more able than she gave herself credit for. In time, Barbara was elected to other school offices and given leading parts in dramatic productions. Thus, under Mrs. Brown's careful direction, Barbara blossomed forth in the space of a year, into a poised, self-confident, contented child.

In teacher conferences, some of her colleagues jokingly referred to Mrs. Brown as Barbara's "manager." Mrs. Brown accepted the title, explaining that it was the job of a good Sunday School teacher to discover children and bring out the best in them. She was able to point out that Louise had begun to realize that she could not always progress because of her

mother's ambitions but needed to demonstrate her own abilities in the group of which she was a part.

THE SUNDAY SCHOOL TEACHER'S GREAT OPPORTUNITY

While Barbara's parents had been well aware of the child's problem, they were in no position to help her, since the problem was closely connected with group situations. The mother had talked a few times with the public school teacher and the father had once spoken to the leader of the Dramatic Club, pointing out the lack of individualization in casting, but such discussions had little effect since both the teacher and club leader fell back quickly on their established patterns. It was Mrs. Brown, the Sunday School teacher, who was able to make the first vital contribution to Barbara's life, which was of immeasurable help a few years later when Barbara entered adolescence.

Not only is Mrs. Brown's position more strategic for directive personality development, but it is also more difficult. Mrs. Brown cannot give examinations in quite the same way as her colleague in the public school. On the other hand, she is not quite as free as the Girl Scout leader, although very often these functions are combined in one and the same person. There is a fine difference which demands particularly clear thinking on the part of Mrs. Brown. Varying with the church and the community, the function of the Sunday School teacher changes, as do her specific goals. As long as we talk about the Sunday School's objective under the headline of "spiritual values" there is very little difference between one Sunday School and another or between the Sunday School and any organization dealing with young people. But the moment we come down to specifics, the question of means and ends or what comes first has to be solved. Is a knowledge of the history of religion the aim, or is it personality integration?

The instructor of swimming has a relatively easy task. He can test a person's swimming ability, observing the techniques involved—the stroke, the kick, the breathing. With a stopwatch, he may even time these movements. He has standards of comparison which enable him to know whether or not he has succeeded in teaching swimming to his pupils. The instructor

of religion, on the other hand, has neither techniques nor stopwatch with which to measure spiritual accomplishments. Because of this, the Sunday School teacher often relies on an accumulation of Biblical knowledge or a grasp of religious customs and their origin. However, she does not consider these results a real indication of her teaching ability. If she were to fill out a report card as the public school teacher does, the personality of her pupils would be the most important factor, while factual knowledge would take second place. If, therefore, her objectives are change of attitude and the acquiring of sound ethical values, her teaching will be directed toward these goals.

Because the Sunday School teacher finds herself in much closer relationship with her students than does the average teacher, she is sometimes concerned lest the atmosphere in one setting carry over into the other and affect her "prestige." This concern is entirely the teacher's rather than the students. As we have pointed out in the chapter dealing with discipline, her prestige will not be affected as long as the teacher can be relaxed enough to expect no more than the individual can give and the group goal of the moment demands. For example, in a classroom, the goal is to impart information, and discipline is indicated by the amount of voluntary restraint on the part of each individual. The children are expected to be quiet and listen while the teacher talks. On a treasure hunt or a hike, however, the goal is entirely different, and discipline is indicated by the degree to which the members of the group come back to the starting point within a specified time. They may shout, run, and chase all over for the treasure, and still have good discipline. Similarly, they would expect the leader to behave differently in each situation and would be irritated if she attempted to appear on the hike the way she does in the classroom.

Flexibility is also essential in a Sunday School teacher, since she sees her pupils on the average of one hour a week and does not always keep in mind the numerous influences to which they are subjected the remaining fifty-nine hours. While she thinks in terms of continuity, for the child there is a very decided break between one lesson and the next. Between one Sunday and the next, he has gone to school five days, has been with his family, has played with other children, has read books

or magazines, has listened to any number of radio programs—in short, has been influenced by numerous experiences entirely outside the control of the Sunday School teacher.

It is therefore helpful to the success of a Sunday School that the experience with a Sunday School teacher always remain something special in the child's life. If it becomes as much of a routine as the morning assembly in many schools, it will lose much of the meaning that this experience can hold for children.

The relationship between teacher and pupil is more tenuous and significant, both as regards getting across the subject matter in purely factual form and the attitude the leader is hoping to convey. The test of sound relationship and real understanding comes when the youngsters' behavior seems to spell open contempt for the subject taught. It is not easy, for example, for a Sunday School teacher fully to accept a child who lies. It is very human and understandable that the Sunday School teacher will consider a lie with more feeling than perhaps the instructor of French or swimming, for to her lying is the very contradiction of what she is trying to teach. She feels frustrated and questions the pupil's learning ability. Whereas, in some other subject, if a pupil fails to apply himself, the teacher may drill him on the subject matter, the Sunday School teacher who catches her student in a lie is often likely to become righteous and morally indignant about it. This of course does not help her to get her point across more effectively, since the student's inability to learn his lesson is definitely an emotional rather than learning problem. It is therefore particularly important that the Sunday School teacher have a sound knowledge of what to expect from her students, not in any given class, but rather at any given age level.

The Sunday School teacher usually has a very definite feeling for the "absolutes"—scriptural passages that are considered fundamental—but she does not always present her teaching sympathetically. Take, for example, the well-known problem of swearing or use of bad language, so often found in pre-adolescence and adolescence. A great many Sunday School teachers even today are shocked by this practice and regard it as sinful, backing up their conviction by quoting from the Bible. They have not learned to understand that the use of bad language varies with different levels of development and represents different

stages of emotional growth, and that therefore it cannot be looked upon as something static and absolute, but needs to be understood like any other symptom of behavior. While it may be understandable for a teacher to become indignant at this point, obviously she is not thereby helping Johnny to use better language. If the teacher knows that there is a reason for swearing which needs to be understood, not excused, she will do more to establish a better relationship between herself and the offender and give him a chance to identify himself with her. If this point has been reached, he will want to talk the way she does and certainly avoid behavior of which she disapproves.

Since the use of bad language frequently becomes a habit, the user is not always aware of it. The Sunday School teacher can be of real help in developing insight into the problem by helping a child to understand why he uses language that is socially not acceptable. If she has this relationship, unmarred by expressions of shock, she is in a position to ask the child calmly why he is using such language. The interview, no matter how informally conducted, may be patterned after the talking to or the listening to methods described earlier. It will be successful if the teacher can keep her own desire to hear mature language apart from the youngster's need to express his feelings in that particular way.

Another large area where absolutes get in the way of a sound mental-hygiene approach is the adolescent's changing attitude toward his parents, which frequently violates the teachings of the Bible. The Sunday School teacher cannot accomplish her aim in this matter giving vent to righteous indignation over such violations or by a verbal enunciation of the absolutes. Such methods lead merely to further repression of very strong and temporary feelings, and produce the kind of lip service that good educators do not wish to promote. Teachers often fail to see young people as ever-changing dynamic individuals, but rather look upon them as miniature adults. They frequently consider the child a "little parishioner," making allowances for differences between childhood and adulthood in degree but not in kind. Because this is against natural law, they cannot hope to get the mature, spiritually endowed adult of whom they dream. It might help to remind some teachers of religious

education that the great spiritual leaders of the past aimed essentially at developing a sound and well-integrated personality, rather than at teaching theological doctrine.

If we could relax sufficiently to permit ourselves to see all the woods, we might stop being too impressed with one particular tree: our own specialty. In other words, we might consider more emphasis on building attitudes than on transmitting knowledge. At present, we are concerned in theory with the roots of behavior but in practice almost exclusively with the tree of knowledge. Perhaps the tree will grow stronger if teachers and leaders put their best efforts into the soil. This will mean less to show for today, but better citizens for tomorrow.

IN BRIEF

Sunday School, another common meeting ground between leaders and groups, is a combination of small groups for work and play, with the necessary emphasis on individualization.

Since the Sunday School teacher deals with intangible values, it is difficult for her to measure objective results. Relationship is more tenuous and significant, both for getting across the material and for the spiritual values she hopes to develop. Since she deals with "absolutes," they are not always integrated in her teaching atmosphere. They do often get in the way of her relationships. This is particularly obvious when children violate the very laws which the teacher tries to get across to them. It is therefore necessary that the Sunday School teacher look on the "absolutes" as a dynamic rather than a static concept which has to be experienced with gradual and slow maturation. Lying, swearing and disrespect of elders is sometimes hard to accept for Sunday School teachers and yet without complete understanding of this temporary behavior, she will not be able to help people develop more permanent ethical values.

In Sunday School, more than any other place of learning, emphasis on attitudes rather than on acquisition of doctrine is necessary.

Common to All Groups

THERE ARE, of course, many more and different settings in which leaders and groups operate. We have mentioned only a few. But even if we had described every single agency that deals with groups in this country, the book would fall short of its goal unless it pointed out the one universal setting common to all: the democratic society.

Democracy seems . . . to mean that arrangement of life by which the members of a group, small or large, have opportunity to participate in proportion to their maturity and ability, in deciding, planning, executing and evaluating all matters in which the group is concerned, matters both within the life of the group and also in the group's relationship to other groups and the common life of which the group is a part. (15)

If we proceed on this definition of democracy, the function of the group as the "nursery of human nature in the world about us" (16) takes on a fundamental role. And to study the role of the group and the group-work process would be as important to the safety of democracy as the study of engineering is to the safety of bridges and skyscrapers.

Thousands and thousands of voluntary groups permeate our society, groups that aim to give the individual practical experience for democratic leadership.

From these groups people get experience for work on large associations and pressure groups, political, economical and so forth. From here emanate leaders for labor unions, political organizations, Senate and Congress. (17)

Group leaders will have to face the fact that the young people of today will be tomorrow's citizens. Unless they learn to operate in and through groups, they will never learn democracy. The school of rugged individualism teaches them to mind their own business. Whether they will really understand that the best way to mind their own business is to be aware of other people's business as well depends very much on the ex-

perience they have had in their club or group, in their Scout troop, in their 4-H Club.

WHAT CITIZENSHIP MEANS

If democracy were taken seriously as a way of living, there would be more participation than the average citizen gives to group life. Why is it that a large majority of our population are democratically illiterate, do not know how to operate through groups, and believe that their contribution to government lies in casting a ballot at election time? Part of the answer lies in the group experience they have had before they were preoccupied with earning a living. It is quite possible that they managed to have a good time and learn some very useful skills without having been seriously exposed to the group process. Or, it may have been their experience that the individual counts for little in society, so that they will conclude that it makes very little difference whether they vote or not, whether they attend a meeting or not, whether they sign a petition or not.

Nor is lip service to "experience in democracy" enough. Some groups and agencies hope to teach democratic participation by asking their members to vote on certain issues or to set up some form of parliamentary body. While these methods can be helpful, they have little meaning unless they are based on a sound group-work process which is fully cognizant of the needs of the individual and the way in which they can be met by the group.

Only if we aim for maturity in feeling and thinking can we hope for the kind of society we all dream about. Maturity does not come about by itself. It depends upon the degree of understanding adults bring to young people in their formative years. In that sense, mental hygiene is a basic prerequisite for a democratic society and, conversely, a moral society is the basis for mental hygiene.

Nobody would claim that ours is a moral society in view of the strong religious, racial, and national prejudices which permeate its structure and which we encounter constantly in the small groups that are the test-tubes for the future society. Many of us belong to groups whose membership is composed

of various racial or national backgrounds, each with its established opinion about the others. It is, therefore, not uncommon for members to express their hostility against an adult leader by falling back on the established pattern of prejudice in their homes. Group leaders who cope with these open expressions of hostility because of a difference in religion, race, or creed frequently attack this disease with factual information, using slides, statistics, and anthropological data.

It is necessary to remember that attitudes are determined by both conscious and unconscious motivations. We do not always know the deeper reasons for our attitudes, but when pressed find explanations which sound logical or even reasonable. Such rationalization, while giving comfort for the moment, does not reveal the underlying factors or the real reasons for our thinking.

ALL OF US HAVE PREJUDICES

It is necessary to state again that everyone has prejudices. Each of us has formed judgments on an intuitive basis, and thus gives expression to the fact that feelings of an earlier period in our life are still operating in the present. Prejudice might be against a red dress, stewed pears, or the cello; against Shakespeare, Balzac, or Chaucer. It might be directed against individuals, groups of individuals, nations. Since leaders are concerned with helping young people to overcome their prejudices, they may well begin by recognizing their own. As long as we go around believing that our minds are free and open, and that we never judge anybody or anything without having all the "facts," we will fail to be helpful to our young people. They either will not believe our insistence on freedom from prejudice or, if they do, it will make them far removed from the high, pure level we profess to have attained. Moreover, even if we actually have reached that rare stage where we can meet any situation without preconceived hostility, we still have to overcome the most difficult hurdle: the prejudice against the prejudiced person. As leaders of groups, we may have developed to a point of emotional maturity where we can be reasonably fair with everybody, but we cannot help becoming emotionally involved when we meet with a person who wears his prejudices on his sleeve.

Miss Burgin, leader of a club of adolescent Irish-Catholic boys, had started a club newspaper. One of the most inarticulate youngsters who had often been encouraged to speak up in meetings or to write a little piece for the paper, came one day and handed the leader this contribution. The date was May 2, 1945. The contribution was scribbled in pencil on a sheet torn off a composition book:

Mr. Truman is the new President of the United States. He is the 32nd President. I think he will be a good President because he is against colored people. President Roosevelt wanted the colored people to be like us, but if they would be in office there would be a revolution. It is a good thing that there is a new President because President Roosevelt liked the Niggers and the Jews.

Now Miss Burgin was a liberal young woman of fourth-generation Dutch-Protestant stock whose relationship to her Mexican and Negro fellow workers was free and relaxed. As a volunteer worker, in the space of one evening a week, she was accredited with having changed these boys "from a bunch of little animals to a group of gentlemen." Naturally, Tommy's contribution was a distinct shock to her. Her first impulse was to tear up the paper, but on second thought she decided to have a talk with Tommy. After the club meeting, Tommy ran off with his pals, so that a week passed before Miss Burgin saw him again. This gave her time to think the matter over, and she finally decided to present her problem to the fifteen leaders, trained and untrained, paid and volunteer, of the training course conducted by the agency.

This organization had a long tradition of service to various cultural groups. The administration, as well as the founders of the agency, were nationally known as pioneers for intercultural, interracial democracy. Many of the leaders had been with the agency for years, and some of them had grown up in the spirit created by the founders. Therefore their indignation over Tommy's open expression of prejudice and ignorance was deep, and their concern great.

Several of the leaders suggested that Miss Burgin point out to Tommy what the agency stood for. This was generally agreed upon, although there was some discussion as to the best way of explaining the agency's philosophy to a fourteen-year-old. One Irish-Catholic leader thought of bringing the matter to

the attention of Tommy's parents or enlisting the help of the priest in enlightening the boy. Another leader preferred to use the incident as a subject for discussing interracial understanding with the club, using as illustration a few recently published pamphlets, dealing with the scientific aspects of the race problem.

There was some discussion about Tommy and his family. It was found that the ideas expressed in the little article represented the attitude that prevailed in his home. Much as the leaders wished to be of service to Tommy's father and mother, it was recognized that in all these years neither parent had ever participated in any agency project, in spite of numerous attempts to enlist their interest.

All available information about Tommy was finally collected: his relationship to his parents, requests for placements, permission for trips, and a few conferences with the school when Tommy had been absent. From these facts, it became clear that Tommy did not have confidence in his parents, who in turn had left him and his six brothers to their own resources, taking an interest only when the children got into trouble. At such times, the parents used harsh physical punishment.

Once it was fully recognized that Tommy's relationship to Miss Burgin was the most meaningful contact the child had, the group began to wonder about the wisdom of a moralistic attack on his prejudices. It was possible for most of the leaders to realize that such an approach, while righteous and perhaps satisfying to both leader and agency, would not help Tommy. Everyone understood that the traditional appeal to ethical goals would tend to drive Tommy away from Miss Burgin. Regardless of how it was presented, such an approach would be a "lecture," a "talking-to."

It was considered equally unsound to confront Tommy with the statements in his article and compare them with the facts. Even though Tommy was only fourteen years old, he must have heard the facts before in school, in church, over the radio, in newspapers. It was evident, therefore, that Tommy, like many others, was not ready to accept the facts emotionally.

Tommy's ignorance was really his inability to accept what he knew. Tommy knew better, and yet he wrote this article.

Miss Burgin would not have helped him either by moralizing about neighborliness and brotherhood, or by pointing out the erroneous facts represented in his article. With this approach, she would close the one door through which Tommy could be reached: her relationship to him.

All prejudiced behavior in a child is symptomatic of his underlying feelings. It meets a specific need, and the leader falls short of her aims if she does not get to know why he has chosen this form to express his feelings. Because this topic has such far-reaching implications, way beyond the range of this book, we wish to stress once again that we are only speaking to leaders of young people and their attempts to handle prejudice in young people.

UNDERSTANDING AND CURING PREJUDICE

Leaders who, like Miss Burgin, are concerned with helping boys and girls to overcome their prejudices are usually anxious to do something about it as quickly as possible. They remind one of the mother who gets so upset at seeing her child come home dirty from the street that she cannot get him washed fast enough, as though more harm would come to the skin if the dirt were allowed to stay on another minute. Similarly, youth leaders feel that when one of their charges expresses a shocking opinion, it must be immediately eradicated from his mind. Those of us who have dealt with children for a long time know that we cannot change attitudes immediately. We would like to, all right, but this is our own need and concern, not the child's. There are no short cuts to helping people; it can only be done via the road to understanding.

How, then, can we understand Tommy and his expressions of prejudice? For clarification, let us think of prejudice as a disease—a germ, floating freely in the air and attacking certain people. Some will be immune to it; their healthy constitution offers a high resistance. Others, like Tommy, have a poor constitution and their resistance is low. So they break out with prejudice, which, like the measles, is contagious.

What is the role of "Dr. Leader" at this point? Is it to cure Tommy and build up his emotional resistance, or is it to clear the air of prejudice germs? The answer is "both." As a group

leader, it is his job to cure Tommy and build up his resistance; but as a socially conscious citizen, it is also his job to wage war against the germ. The second job will have to be undertaken with all the other people who are socially conscious. It is a social-action job of large proportions. Here we are primarily concerned with the group leader and his responsibility.

Now that Tommy has caught the disease, the group leader must make his diagnosis and then give treatment. In the first place, why did Tommy catch it? He seems to fall into that group of victims who have a very characteristic defect—namely, fear of the unknown. Let us call this fear "P," for personality factor, and the disease itself "S," for society factor. The group leader should concern himself primarily with the "P" factor because it falls within his competence, but usually he chooses the "S" factor instead and finds himself frustrated because he is attempting the impossible task of fighting single-handed such gigantic forces as public ignorance and misinformation, and power groups that control education and politics.

We repeat that if a leader is deeply concerned about those factors, he will have to join with a group of sympathizers and take the cause of social action, rather than hope to stamp out evil influences in his small club. In common with every parent who hopes to bring up his child in the tradition of Jefferson and Lincoln, the conscientious leader must deal with the "P" factor and build up resistance against diseases.

Where fear is the cause of prejudice, the leader can operate competently by giving the child experiences which in time will overcome his weakness. Once this has been accomplished, the child will have the same healthy emotional resistance to the "S" factor that a healthy body has to his germ-infected environment. To attack prejudice from a moralistic angle, however, is a vain attempt to deal with the "S" factor exclusively. This approach tends merely to enhance the fear and lower the individual's resistance against prejudice.

In Tommy's case, Miss Burgin realized that here was a badly upset, emotionally sick youngster who lacked security and therefore had little resistance against prejudice. However, Tommy apparently felt free enough with Miss Burgin to talk and write as he pleased, indicative that the relationship was good and could be used to give him more security in order to

build up resistance. Obviously, with this goal it would have been harmful to make an issue out of his article. Miss Burgin therefore decided to put the article in the confidential record of the club file and to compare it with other articles that Tommy would bring in as time went on, thus observing his development and measuring her own ability to give him strength and security.

When Tommy came to her a week later, he asked Miss Burgin whether she had read his piece and whether it would be printed. The leader said that she would like to talk with Tommy about it a little more if he were interested. She explained that in real newspapers and magazines, editors often have to make some changes in writers' contributions. She wondered whether Tommy would like to stay after the meeting to go over the piece and perhaps help her with some of the other contributions. Tommy shrugged his shoulders and answered: "Maybe." The leader took this to mean that Tommy was not ready to go into the matter seriously and was not surprised when he did not come back.

Since the paper had to be mimeographed that week, the leader had to anticipate Tommy's reaction when he discovered that his article had not been printed. In order to counteract his disappointment and give Tommy a way out, she wrote him a brief note explaining that, since he had not returned to talk with her and the paper had to be gotten out, she hoped he would not mind if his piece did not appear in this issue. The note had the desired effect; Tommy did not show disappointment when he opened the club newspaper the following week. Miss Burgin made sure of the reaction by asking casually whether Tommy had received her letter, to which the youngster nodded and went on reading the sport page. During the next few months, Miss Burgin found many occasions to come closer to this troubled child who had demonstrated in his contribution how little resistance he had against the "S" factor, which was not difficult to understand in the light of his family background.

For those leaders who are concerned with results and factual evidences of changes, we would like to mention a little party at the end of the club season. The members had a good time and talked informally about the things they had done together.

One person whose name came up frequently as a "swell guy" was the man in charge of the swimming pool to which they had gone once a week with Miss Burgin. She took occasion to mention casually to Tommy, who sat next to her, that Mr. Brown happened to be Jewish. Tommy did not respond to this. He kept perfectly quiet and continued to eat his ice-cream. This silence was more meaningful than any verbal expression could have been. The leader realized that, not so long ago, she could not have told Tommy this without getting a violent reaction. Undoubtedly Tommy had lost some of his fears, and with it some of his prejudice, because of the sound relationship that existed between him and his leader, his identification with her and the group, and, in the case of Mr. Brown, the pleasant associations he had had with him.

PREJUDICE AND SHAME

The dynamics operating in Tommy's case of prejudice have been considered in some detail because they are applicable to that large group of people infected with prejudice because of fear. Another large group of prejudices is based on rejection of oneself or one's family. This is expressed in such forms as changing one's name, denying or attempting to deny one's cultural or racial backgrounds, and changing one's religion. It frequently takes the form of hostility towards a family group ostensibly because of the culture it represents.

One blue-eyed, blond adolescent of fifteen in a club of boys was known for his violent hate of Puerto Ricans. He joined with other boys in vicious fights against Puerto Rican youths. At times these fights led to stabbing and serious injuries.

Fred, natural leader of the Bachelors Club, was the concern of Mr. Fuller, the adult leader in charge. He was a silent boy of strong build whose defiance of the leader was open. He expressed it by never looking at the leader and speaking to him only when necessary, and then very shortly. He was the oldest of the boys and well able to handle himself in a fight. Nothing was known of Fred's family. While other boys occasionally spoke of their brothers or sisters, their home or parents, Fred appeared to have no family and to live by himself.

The leader, a powerfully built man of thirty, was a former

prize-fighter and recently discharged army pilot who wore his wings proudly on his civilian suit. The rivalry between Mr. Fuller and Fred was keen, although it was never openly expressed. Mr. Fuller was quite unhappy about Fred's resistance, which he felt prevented the other boys from relating themselves to him more adequately. He had listened to Fred's violent anti-Negro and anti-Puerto Rican remarks for a long time, and admitted there had been moments when he was ready to "crack his skull." Mr. Fuller made no bones about the fact that he had little patience with the "small-fry Fascist." The club went along rather badly, and the situation was climaxed by a basketball game with another team that had several Negro players. When the Bachelors refused to accept the decision of the coach, they were disqualified. A fight ensued in the shower room, in which one of the Bachelors was injured.

Fred came out openly against Mr. Fuller for having booked this game. The leader, unaware of Fred's problems, reacted to the boy's aggression with counter-aggression, which led to Fred's calling Mr. Fuller names and insulting him in front of the others. Because the leader had shown little insight into Fred's problem, he found himself on the defensive and instinctively hit the boy.

The shower room was silent after Mr. Fuller had struck the blow. Fred, fighting down his tears, looked with hate at the big man and walked away. None of the boys talked. Mr. Fuller, realizing how alone he was, went downstairs to the other team's coach. When the Bachelors' team appeared, all dressed and as one body, he attempted to talk to the boys, but there was no response and they went off, swinging their satchels.

Because the team did not show up for practice the following week, Mr. Fuller found it necessary to discuss the situation with the agency administration. He admitted freely that he had lost his temper. In discussing the future of the Bachelors, they talked about Fred, the natural leader. For the first time, Mr. Fuller asked what the matter might be with this boy. The director knew nothing about Fred. As they talked, the janitor came in to ask for a key, and the director inquired from him about Fred, since the old man knew practically everyone in the building and in the community. After some prodding, the old man remembered that he was the brother of Rachael, a

member of the Dramatic Club. Rachael was in charge of props and often came to him for a piece of furniture or some bulbs for the stage. Fred's sister meant nothing to either Mr. Fuller or the director, but at that moment a group of girls passed outside their room, going toward the basement where the stage was located. "There she is," said the janitor, "the one with the red ribbon."

Both Mr. Fuller and the director looked through the window, but were unable to identify Rachael before the girls disappeared behind the stairs. Mr. Fuller remarked that he had only seen a few dark-skinned girls going down the stairs.

"Didn't you see the one with the red ribbon?" asked the Janitor.

"I guess so," said Mr. Fuller, "but they were all dark-skinned."

"Well," the janitor said, "Rachael was one of them."

When he saw the surprise of the other man, he asked them what was wrong. Mr. Fuller said he could not understand how Fred's sister could be a Negro girl. The janitor then explained that this was a Puerto Rican family whom he had known a long time. The father was very light, but the mother was dark-skinned.

"Are you sure," the director asked, "that Fred is Rachael's brother?"

"Everybody knows that," was the reply.

It now became apparent that Fred's prejudice against Puerto Ricans was actually a rejection of his own family and an expression of his inability to identify himself with them. The director pointed out how mixed-up this boy was. Mr. Fuller was very thoughtful: "Why, he's ashamed of his family. What an unhappy boy he must be."

The case of Fred illustrates also the aggressions that often develop with this pattern. It was of course not possible for Mr. Fuller to help Fred after the relationship had been damaged so deeply. He continued with the club, but never got the thrill out of it that he did with his other groups, where he was more successful as he learned and gained insight.

As in the case of prejudice based on fear of the unknown, here, too, the leader's job would have to be around the personality factor. If it had been possible to help Fred to accept

himself as he was, he would have gained security and built up resistance against the diseases of society. Since this problem went very deep, it would probably have been necessary to secure the help of a therapist in addition to the group leader. In this specific example, neither help through the group nor referral to an individual worker was feasible, so that Fred, like so many other young people, went without help, although he continued to play basketball and was officially counted as one of those whom the agency served.

TODAY'S GROUP MEMBERS: TOMORROW'S CITIZENS

In all likelihood, Fred will fall an easy prey to some demagogue or crooked politician later on in life. Can we afford to dismiss the vote he will cast, the action he will take for or against some issue, by saying that he is ignorant or stupid, or by calling him a "screwball"? We think not. We think it is very realistic to face the fact that there are millions of citizens like Fred, people of all creeds and colors, people who go around with unsolved problems of their own, and who use the environment to work them out.

The role that we play in shaping the future of society cannot possibly be overestimated. Since the group provides for the individual the sense of social reality, the kind of experience that he will get in the group will determine to a very large degree the way in which he looks on the world around him. Because we have lost the intimacy of the small neighborhood, the town meeting, and the free exchange of opinion, the small group or clubs of today are taking the place of the original communities. Aside from the family group, the voluntary association, of which you are the leader, is the next most important factor in the life of the growing individual.

Although many leaders originally had nothing else in mind but to teach a couple of youngsters how to play basketball, make a fire, raise a calf for the county fair, put on a nice play, sing some beautiful folk songs, make a leather belt, they will have to face the fact that the implications are much greater. Because individual and group experience depends very much on the way we lead our clubs, all future decisions and develop-

ments hinge on understanding of ourselves, them, and the group process.

The members of our groups who today fight violently over the first place at bat will tomorrow have to fight for the kind of world than mankind is dreaming about. We will have to help them to become immune against the diseases of society. The time is short. The choice between one world and chaos will be made by the boys and girls in our clubs.

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